

225 d 20

SERMONS

PREACHED Upon

Several OCCASIONS.

By ROBERT SOUTH, D. D.

VOL. V.

Containing the following SUBJECTS, *viz.*

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|--|---|
| I. Virtuous Education of Youth, the Way to a happy Old Age. | VII. Enthusiasts not led by the Spirit of God. |
| II. Pretence of Conscience, no Excuse for Rebellion. | VIII. The Scripture a sufficient Guide to Salvation. |
| III. Satan himself transformed into an Angel of Light. | IX. Thankfulness for past Mercies, the way to obtain future Blessings. |
| IV. The Certainty of our Saviour's Resurrection. | X. The Nature, Causes, and Consequences of Envy. |
| V. Obedience for Conscience Sake, the Duty of good Subjects. | XI. Christ's Promise, the Support of his despised Ministers. |
| VI. Man's Inability to find out God's Judgments. | XII. The false Methods of governing and establishing the Church of <i>England</i> , exploded. |
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L O N D O N:

Printed for H. LINTOT, in *Fleetstreet*.

MDCCXXXVII.

SEERMONS

DE ROBERT FRANK

SEER OF WESTMINSTER

Together with the

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SEERMONS

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T O T H E

Reverend, Learned, and very Worthy

Dr. ROBERT FRIEND,

Head MASTER of WESTMINSTER SCHOOL;

Together with the Other

Subordinate MASTERS of the same;

As likewise to all such as heretofore in their several Times
have been, and those who at present actually are,

MEMBERS of that *Royal Foundation*,

Next in Fame to its

Glorious Foundress Queen *ELIZABETH*;

R O B E R T S O U T H

Humbly Dedicates this FIFTH VOLUME of his

S E R M O N S,

As standing for ever obliged

By the most Sacred Ties of Gratitude;

And the WORK it self no less owing all, that is valuable in it,

(If any thing therein ought to be accounted really so)

To the Author's Education in that

Renowned SEMINARY. of

LEARNING, LOYALTY, and RELIGION.

TO THE
 THE
 Chief HE A D S
 OF THE
 SERMONS in Vol. V

SERMON I
 PROV. xxii. 6. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Page 1.
 The Rebellion of Forty-one has had ever since a very pernicious influence upon the kingdom, &c. to 17. To hinder the mischief wherof Solomon's advice is best, to plant the truth youth, in order to ensure the practice of it in a man's mature or declining age, to 14. For since every man is naturally disposed to evil, and this evil principle will not be (mind'd) put into action, and those vicious habits will, from partial, grow rational, can no remedy against this can be had but by an early discipline, it is absolutely necessary that the minds of youth should be stored with virtuous preventing education, 17 to 20. What is the business of the young man, that is valuable in his Parents, who expect no other reward of him, which they desire to see in him.

RENEWED SEMINARY of
 LEARNING, LOYALTY, and RELIGION.

THE
Chief HEADS
OF THE
SERMONS *in* VOL. V.

SERMON I.

PROV. xxii. 6. *Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Page 1.

The Rebellion of Forty-one has had ever since a very pernicious influence upon this kingdom, p. 1 to 11. To hinder the mischief whereof, *Solomon's* advice is best, to plant virtue in youth, in order to ensure the practice of it in a man's mature or declining age, 11 to 15. For since every man is naturally disposed to evil, and this evil principle will (if not hinder'd) pass into action, and those vicious habits will, from personal, grow national; and no remedy against this can be had but by an early discipline; it is absolutely necessary, that the minds of youth should be form'd with a virtuous preventing education, 15 to 20. which is the business of

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Lastly, It is incumbent upon great men to suppress conventicling schools or academies, 46 to 48. and to countenance all legal free grammar-schools, 48 to 52.

S E R M O N II.

JUDG. xix. 30. *And it was so, that all that saw it, said; there was no such deed done or seen, from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt, unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.*

p. 55.

These words were occasion'd by a foul and detestable fact, which, for want of kingly government, happen'd in one of the tribes of *Israel*: but may be applied to express the murder of King *Charles* the first, 55 to 62. The unparallell'd strangeness of which deed will appear, if we consider,

1. The qualities, human accomplishments and personal virtues of the person murder'd, 62 to 69.

2. The

2. The gradual preparations to such a murder, a factious ministry and a covenant, *p.* 69 to 71. and their rebellious catechism, 71

3. The actors in this tragical scene, 75 to 78.

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5. The fatal consequences of it, 89. such as were of a civil, 89, 90. or a religious concern, 90 to 94.

Lastly, hereupon we ought to take advice, 94 to 97. and consider, that our sins have been the cause of our calamities; and that the best way to avoid the same evil is to sin no more, 97 to 100.

SERMON III.

2 CORINTH. xi. 14. *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transform'd into an angel of light.* *p.* 103.

These words suppose that there is a devil; and forewarn us against his deceitful disguises, 103 to 108. and the sense of the words may be prosecuted by shewing,

1st. What influence he has upon the soul, and how he conveys his fallacies, 108.

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2. In suggesting the ideas of things to the imagination, 110, 111.

3. In a personal possession of man, *p.* 112 to 114.
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 2. By opposing the power of godliness irreconcilably to all forms, 152 to 154.
 3. By making the kingdom of Christ oppose the kingdoms of the world, 155 to 158.
- Therefore we ought not to cast the least pleasing look upon any of his insidious offers, 155 to 161. but encounter him with watchfulness and prayer, 162.

S E R M O N IV.

JOHN XX. 29. *Jesus saith unto him: Thomas, because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they, who have not seen, and yet have believed.* *p.* 165.
The

The resurrection of a body before its total dissolution is easier to be believed than after it; and it was this last sort of resurrection, which puzzled *Thomas's* reason, 165 to 171. with various objections, 171 to 173. Which, after some preliminary considerations, 174, 175. are severally proposed, and answer'd under eight heads, 175 to 190. together with a confutation of the lye invented by the *Jews*, 190 to 193. Then, all objections being removed, Christ's resurrection is proposed to our belief upon certain and sufficient grounds, 193 to 197, viz.

1st. The constant, uniform affirmation of such persons, as had sufficient means to be inform'd of the truth, 197. and were of an unquestionable sincerity, 198, 199, 200.

2dly. The miracles which confirm'd the Apostles words, 200, 201.

Lastly, That such tradition has greater reason for its belief, than can be suggested for its disbelief, 203, 204.

Thence we ought to admire the commanding excellency of faith, which can force its way through the opposition of carnal reason, with an entire submission to divine revelation, 204 to 209.

SERMON V.

ROM. xiii. 5. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* p. 213..

In these words there is,

1st. A

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1st. A duty enjoined, *viz.* subjection, 214. which the believers of the church of *Rome*, are commanded to pay *Nero*, 215 to 217.

2dly. The ground of this duty, for conscience sake, 217 to 221. In which we are to consider,

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2. The scandal which resistance casts upon christianity, 242 to 245.

S E R M O N VI.

ROM. ii. 33. — *How unsearchable are his ways, and his judgments past finding out!* p. 249.

The methods of divine providence, whereof King *Charles's* return (the subject of this day's commemoration) is an eminent instance, surpass all human apprehension, 249 to 253. and the most advanced wisdom is an incompetent judge of the ways of God, with respect,

1st. To the reason or cause of them, 254. For men are prone to assign such causes as are either false, as that the happy in this life are the proper objects of God's love; the miserable, of his hatred, 254 to 260. and that prosperity always attends innocence, and sufferings, guilt, 260 to 270. or imperfect, 270, 271.
2dly. To

2dly. To the event or issue of them, 272. For men usually prognosticate the event of an action, according to the measure of the ability of second agents, 272, 273. or from success formerly gain'd under the same, or less probable circumstances, 273 to 275. or according to the preparations made for it, and the power imploy'd in it, 276 to 280.

Hence we may infer,

1. The folly of making success the rule of our actions, 280 to 283.
2. The necessity of depending upon providence, 283 to 285.
3. The impossibility of a rational dependence, but in the way of lawful courses, 285 to 289.

SERMON VII. and VIII.

ROM. viii. 14. *For as many as are led by the spirit of God, are the sons of God.* p. 293, 326.

It being clear, that the spirit of God in some degree leads and helps all men, 294 to 296. 'twill be necessary, in the prosecution of these words, to shew,

1st. How the spirit is said to be in men, 296. viz. two ways allowable by scripture, either,

1. Substantially, as he filleth all things, 296, 297.
2. By the effects he produces in them, 297.

For the way, pretended to by the *Familists*, viz. a personal indwelling in believers, is not to

to be proved either from Reason, or from Scripture, 298 to 301.

2dly. How men are led by the spirit, 301.
viz.

1. Outwardly, by his prescribing rules of actions in the written word, 302.

2. Inwardly, by his illumination of the judgment, and bending of the will, 302 to 304.

For the way, pretended to by Enthusiasts, viz. his speakingly inwardly to them, 305 to 307. is not allowable; because,

1. Scripture is by the spirit it self declared a rule both necessary and sufficient, 307.

2. That inward speaking is seldom alledg'd but for the patronage of such actions, as can't upon any other account be warranted, 308, 309.

3. It is contrary to the experience of the generality of Christians, 309.

4. It opens a door to all prophaneness and licentiousness of living, 310 to 314.

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345. Also with four Observations relating to the examination of these examples, 329 to 336.

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1. That pretenders to such an inward voice of the spirit in opposition to God's written word, are not to be endured in the communion of a christian church, as being the highest reproach to religion, 349 to 351. Nor,

2. To be tolerated in the state, as having a pernicious influence upon society, 351 to 354.

SERMON IX.

ISAIAH V. 4. *What could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* p. 357.

From these words, a parallel is drawn between the sins of the *Jews*, and those of this nation, 357 to 360. by considering in the Text,

1st. The manner of God's complaint, which runs in a pathetical interrogation, 360. importing in it a surprize grounded upon,

1. The strangeness, 360, 361. and,

2. The unusual indignity of the thing, 361, 362.

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1. The person complaining, God himself, 363, 364.

2. The

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2. The persons complain'd of, the *Jews*, 364, 365.
3. The ground of the complaint, 365. which appears by observing,

1. How God dealt with them, by committing his Oracles to them, 365 to 367. by his miraculous mercies, 368 to 371. and by his judgments for their correction, 372 to 375.

2. How they dealt with God by way of return, 375. And they are charg'd with injustice and oppression, *ver.* 7. 375, 376, 377. rapacity and covetousness, *ver.* 8. 377, 378. luxury and sensuality, *ver.* 11, 12. 378 to 381.

4. The issue of the complaint, *ver.* 5, 6. *viz.* The bereaving them of all their defences, 382. of their laws, and military force, 382, 383. upon the failure of which will follow these evils;

1. From within; a growth of all sects and factions, 383, 384.

2. From without; to be laid waste by a foreign enemy, 385, 386.

S E R M O N X.

JAMES iii. 16. *For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.* p. 389.

In order to prove, that of all sins there is none of greater malignity and baseness than envy, 389. it will be necessary to shew,

- 1st. What it is, and wherein its nature consists, 389 to 394.

- 2dly. What are its causes, 394. on the part,

1. Of

1. Of the person envying, 394. viz. great malice and baseness of nature, 394 to 397. an unreasonable grasping ambition, 397 to 399. an inward sense of a man's own weakness, 399 to 401. idleness, 401 to 404.

2. Of the person envied, 404. viz. great natural parts and abilities, 404 to 406. the favour of princes and great persons, 406 to 408. wealth and prosperity, 408 to 412. esteem and reputation, 412 to 414.

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1. To the envious person himself, 414 to 417.

2. To the person envied, 417. viz. a busy prying into all his concerns, 417, 418. calumny and detraction, 418 to 421. his utter ruin and destruction, 421 to 423.

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1. The extreme vanity of the best enjoyments of this world, 423 to 425.

2. The safety of the lowest, and the happiness of a middle condition, 425 to 427.

3. The necessity of depending upon providence, 427 to 430.

SERMON XI.

LUKE XXI. 15. *For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.* p. 433

Our Saviour before his death, in order to support the ministers of his church against what

what should befall them after it, leaves with them this promise, 433, 434. in the words of which is implied,

1st. A prediction, that the Apostles should not fail of adversaries, 435 to 443. which would oppose them both in word, by gain-saying, 443 to 447. and indeed by resisting,

447 to 450.
2dly, The promise it self of such an assistance, as should overcome all that opposition, 450. very necessary to remove the fears, which he foresaw would be apt to seize their spirits, 450 to 452. In which promise we may consider,

1. The thing promised, *viz.* a mouth, 452. or an ability of speaking, with great perspicuity, 453 to 456. simplicity, 456 to 459. zeal, 459 to 461. and wisdom, or a prudence in action and behaviour, 461. by opposing neither things nor persons any further than they stood in their way, 462. and opposing them resolutely, whenever they did, 463. Which two, *viz.* mouth and wisdom, being united, have the greatest advantage, 464, 465.

2. The person promising, *viz.* Christ, 465.

3. The means, by which that promise was performed, *viz.* the effusion of the Holy Ghost, 466 to 468.

SERMON XII.

GAL. ii. 5. *To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you.* p. 471.

From the way of St. Paul's dealing with the *Schismatics* of his time, 471 to 478. a pattern may be drawn, how to deal with our *Dissenters*, viz. not to yield up the least lawful receiv'd constitution of our church to their demands or pretences, tho' never so urging and importunate, 478. The prosecution of which assertion shall be manag'd by considering,

1st. The pretences alledged by *Dissenters* against our church's ceremonies, 478. As,

1. The unlawfulness of those ceremonies, 480 to 482.
2. Their inexpediency, 482 to 484.
3. Their smallness, 484 to 486. Which three exceptions are confuted severally, 481 to 487.

2dly. The consequences of yielding or giving them up, 487. Which will appear very dangerous, if we observe,

1. The temper and disposition of those men, who press for such a compliance, 487 to 489.
2. The effects of such a compliance heretofore, 489 to 492. and those, which a comprehension is likely to produce for the future, 492 to 495. together with a discourse upon toleration, 495 to 506.

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3dly. The good and great influence of a strict adherence to the constitutions of our church, in procuring the settlement of it, and preserving the purity of the gospel amongst us, 506. because it is the most sovereign means,

1. To preserve unity in the church, 506 to 509.

2. To beget in the church's enemies, an opinion of the requisiteness of those usages, 509 to 513.

3. To possess them with an awful esteem of the conscience of the governours of the church, 513 to 517.

Lastly, a brief recapitulation is made of all the fore-alledg'd reasons and arguments, why (according to St. *Paul's* example and dealing with the Judaizing Christians) we are by no means to give place in the least to our *Dissenters*, 517 to 520.

Virtuous

The Virtuous Education of YOUTH,
the surest, if not sole Way to an
happy and honourable OLD AGE.

A
DISCOURSE
UPON

PROVERBS xxii. Ver. 6.

WITH

The Author's Advertisement to the Reader.

VOL. V.

B

Chief Justice, Vol. V.

The Virtuous Education of Youth,
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happy and honorable Old Age.

DISCOURSE

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WITH

The Author's Advertisement to the Reader.

Vol. V. B

AN ADVERTISEMENT to the READER concerning the following SERMON.

WHosoever shall judge it worth his time to peruse the following discourse, (if it meets with any such) he is desired to take notice that it was penned, and prepared to have been preached at Westminster-Abbey, at a solemn meeting of such as had been bred at Westminster School. But the death of King Charles II. happening in the mean time, the design of this solemnity fell to the ground, together with him, and was never resumed since; though what the reason of this might be, I neither know, nor ever thought it worth while to enquire. It being abundantly enough for me, that I can with great truth affirm, that I never offered myself to this service, nor so much as thought of appearing in a post so manifestly above me; but that a * very great person, (whose word was then law, as well as his profession) was pleased mero motu (to speak in the prerogative stile, as best suiting so commanding a genius) to put this

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task

* The Lord Jefferys.

task upon me, as well as, afterwards, to supersede the performance of it: The much kinder *Act* this of the two, I must confess, and that in more respects than one, as saving me the trouble of delivering, and at the same time blushing at so mean a discourse, and the congregation also, the greater of hearing it. But what farther cause there was, or might be of so much uncertainty in this whole proceeding, I cannot tell; unless possibly, that what his Lordship as Chief Justice had determined, he thought fit as Chancellor to reverse.

Nevertheless, out of an earnest (and I hope very justifiable) desire, partly to pass a due encomium (or such an one at least as I am able) upon so noble a seat of the Muses, as this renowned school has been always accounted hitherto; and partly to own the obligation and debt lying upon me to the place of my education, I have here at length presumed to publish it. So that, although neither at the time appointed for that solemn meeting, nor ever since, have I had any opportunity given me to preach this sermon myself; yet now that it is printed, possibly some other may condescend to do it, as before, in several such cases, the like has been too well known to have been done.

S E R M O N I.

Virtuous Education of Youth,
the Way to a happy Old Age.

PROV. XXii. 6.

*Train up a child in the way he should
go, and when he is old he will not
depart from it.*

WHEN I look back upon the old infamous Rebellion and Civil War of *Forty-one*, which like an irresistible torrent broke in upon, and bore down the whole frame of our government, both in church and state; together with the principal concerns of private families, and the personal interests of particular men, (as it is not imaginable, that where a deluge overtops the mountains, it should spare the valleys;) and when I consider also, how fresh all this is in the remembrance

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of many, and how frequent in the discourse of most, and in both carrying the same face of horror (as inseparable from such reflexions:) I have wondered with myself, and that even to astonishment, how it should be possible, that in the turn of so few years, there should be so numerous a party of men in these kingdoms, who (as if the remembrance of all those dismal days between *forty* and *sixty*, were utterly erased out of the minds of men, and struck out of the annals of time,) are still prepared and ready, nay, eager and impetuously bent to act over the same tragical scene again. Witness, first of all, the many virulent and base libels spread over the whole nation against the King and his government. And in the next place, the design of seizing his royal person, while the Parliament was held in *Oxford* in the year 1682. And likewise the *Rye-Conspiracy*, formed and intended for the assassination of the King, and of the Duke his brother, in the year 1683. And lastly (though antecedent in time) the two famous * *City-Cavalcades* of clubmen in the two years of 1679 and 1680, countenanced and encouraged under that silly pretence of *Burning*

* *R. C.* said he had tossed up the Ball, and his successor *P. W.* said *he would keep it up*. That is to say, *Extortion* began the Dance, and *Perjury* would carry it on.

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the Pope, but carry'd on with so much insolence and audacious fury, and such an open barefaced contempt of all authority; as if the rabble had in plain terms bid the Government do its worst, and touch, or meddle with them, if it durst. So hard has the experience of the world found it, for the pardon of a guilt (too big for the common measures of *Pardon*) to produce any thing better than the same practices, which had been *pardoned* before.

But since nothing can happen without some cause or other, I have been farther considering with myself what the cause of this terrible evil, which still looks so grim upon the government, should be. And to me it seems to be this: That as the forementioned Rebellion and Civil War brought upon the nation a general dissolution of order, and a corruption and debauchment of men's manners; so, the greatest part of the nation by much now alive, has been *born*, or at least *bred* since that *Fatal Rebellion*. For surely those who are now about, or under fifty years of age, make a much greater number in the kingdom, than those who are above it; especially so much above it, as to have passed their *Youth* before the time of the late confusions; which have since so perfectly changed and new-model'd, or

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rather

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rather extinguished the morality, nay, the very natural temper of the *English* nation.

For this is certain, that wise and thinking men observe with sorrow, that the change is so very great and bad, that there is no relation in society or common life but has suffered, and been the worse for it. For look into families, and you will find parents complaining, that their children pay them not that duty and reverence, which they have heard and read, that children used to shew their parents heretofore. Masters also complain, that servants are neither so obedient, nor so trusty as in former times. And lastly, for the conjugal relation (a thing of the greatest and most direct influence upon the weal or wo of societies, of any other thing in the world besides) it is but too frequent a complaint, that neither are men so good husbands, nor women so good wives, as they were, before that *Accursed Rebellion* had made that fatal leading breach in the conjugal tye between the *best of Kings*, and the *happiest of People*. But now, how comes all this to pass? Why, from the exorbitant licence of mens education. They were bred in lawless, ungoverned times, and conventicle fanatick academies, in defiance of the Universities, and when all things were turned topsy-turvy, and the bonds of government

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vernment quite loosed, or broken asunder. So that as soon as they were able to observe any thing, the first thing which they actually did observe, were inferiors trampling upon their superiors; servants called *by vote of Parliament* out of their masters service to fight against their Prince, and so to complete one rebellion with another; and women running in whole shoals to conventicles, to *seek Christ* (forsooth) but to *find some body* else. By which liberties having once leap'd over the severity and strictness of former customs, they found it an easy matter with debauched morals, and defloured consciences, to launch out into much greater. So that no wonder now, if in an age of a more grown and improved debauchery, you see men spending their whole time in *taverns*, and their lives in *duels*; inflaming themselves with wine, till they come to pay the reckoning with their blood: And women spending both time and fortune, and perhaps their honour too, at *balls, plays* and *treats*. The reason of all which is, that they are not now *bred* as they were heretofore: For that which was formerly their *diversion* only, is now their chief, if not sole *business*; and in case you would see or speak with them, you must not look for them at their *own houses*, but at the *playhouse*, if you would find them

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them *at home*. They have quite cashier'd the commandment, which enjoins them *six days doing what they have to do*, and substituted to themselves a new and very different one in the room of it; according to which, they are for *six days to go to plays*, and *to make visits*, setting apart *a seventh*, to go to church *to see* and to be *seen*. A blessed improvement doubtless, and such as the *fops* *our ancestors* (as some use to call them) were never acquainted with. And thus I have in some measure shown you the true grievance, which this *poor* and *distracted kingdom* groans under. A *grievance*, (without the help of a *vote*) properly so called. A grievance springing from a boundless, immense, and absurd liberty. For though the zealous outcry and republican cant still used to join those two tinkling words *Liberty* and *Property* together, (in a very different sense from what belong'd to them) to make a *rattle* for the people; yet I am sure the intolerable excess of *Liberty* has been the chief thing, which has so much contributed to the curtailing their *Properties*; the true, if not only cause, which of late years has made such numbers so troublesome to the government, as they have been.

Well, but if it be our unhappiness, that the mischief is become almost *general*, let us at least

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least prevent the next degree of it, and keep it from being *perpetual*. And this is not to be done but by a remedy, which shall reach as far and deep, as the distemper; for that began early, and therefore the cure must do so too, even from the *childhood* of the patient, and the *infancy* of the disease. There must be one *instauration magna* of the methods and principles of *education*, and the youth of the nation (as it were) new cast into another, and a better mold.

And for this, we have the counsel and conduct of the wisest of men, *Solomon himself*; who knew no other course to ensure a growing flourishing practice of virtue, in a man's mature or declining age, but by planting it in his youth; as he that would have his grounds covered and loaded with fruit in *autumn*, must manure and dress them in the *spring*. *Train up a child* (says he) *in the way that he should go*: the way, *non quâ itur, sed quâ eundum est*. Man is of an active nature, and must have a *way to walk in*, as necessarily as a place to breathe in. And several ways will be sure to offer themselves to his choice; and he will be as sure to choose one of them. His great concern is, that it be a safe one: since as the variety of them makes the choice *difficult*, so the illness of some of
them

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them must make it *dangerous*. For (as the same *Solomon* tells us) there is *a way which seems right in a man's own eyes*, when yet the tendency of it is fatal. An easy, pleasant, and a broad way, a way always throng'd with passengers, but such, that a man is never the safer for travelling *in company*. But this is not the way here chalk'd out to us. But rather a *rugged, strait, and narrow way*; and upon that account, the *lesser*, and consequently the *younger* any one is, the easier may he get into it, and pass through it. In a word, it is the path of virtue, and the high road to heaven, the *via ad bonos mores*; the entrance into which, some say, is never *too late*, and, I am sure, can never be *too soon*. For it is certainly long, and laborious; and therefore, whosoever hopes to reach the end of it, it will concern him to set out betimes; and his great encouragement so to do, is, that this is the likeliest means to give him constancy and perseverance in it. He will not (*says Solomon*) *forsake it when he is old*: And such is the length of the stage, that it will be sure to hold him in his course, and to keep him going on, till he *is grown so*.

It is, in my opinion, very remarkable, that notwithstanding all the rewards which confessedly belong to virtue in both worlds, yet

Solomon,

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Solomon, in the text, alledges no other Argument for, or motive to the course here recommended to us, but the *end of it*: Nor enjoins us the pursuit of virtue in *our youth*, upon any other reason mention'd in the words, but that we may practise *it in our age*. And no doubt it is an excellent one, and will have many others fall in with it, for the enforcement of the duty here prescribed to us.

For can any thing in nature be more odious and despicable, than a wicked old man? A man, who after threescore or fourscore years spent in the world, after so many sacraments, sermons, and other means of grace, taken in, *digested* and *defeated*, shall continue as errant an hypocrite, dissembler and masquerader in religion as ever, still dodging and doubling with God and man, and never speaking his mind, nor so much as opening his mouth in earnest, but when he *eats* or *breathes*.

Again, can any thing be so vile and forlorn, as an old, broken, and decrepit sensualist, *creeping* (as it were) to the devil upon *all four*? Can there be a greater indecency, than an old drunkard? or any thing more noisome and unnatural, than an aged, silver-hair'd wanton, with *frost* in his bones, and *snow* upon his head, following his lewd, senseless amours? a wretch so scorned, so despised,
and

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and so abandoned by all, *that his very Vices forsake him.*

And yet, as youth leaves a man, so age generally finds him: If he passes his youth, juggling, shuffling and dissembling, it is odds but you will have him at the same leger-de-main, and shewing tricks in his age also. And if he spends his young days whoring and drinking, it is ten to one but age will *find him* in the same filthy drudgery still, or at least wishing himself so. And lastly, if death (which cannot be far off from age) finds him so too, his game is then certainly at the best, and his condition (which is the sting of all) never possible to be better.

And therefore, whosoever thou art, who hast enslaved thy self to the paltry, bewitching pleasures of youth, and lookest with a wry face, and a sour eye, upon the rough, afflicting severities of virtue; consider with thy self, that the *pleasures of youth* will not, cannot be the *pleasures of old age*, though the *guilt* of it will. And consider also, what a dismal, intolerable thing it must needs be, for a man to feel a total declension in his strength, his morals, and his esteem together. And remember, that for all the disciplines of temperance, the hardships of labour, and the abridgments of thy swelling appetites, it will
be

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be a full, sufficient, and more than equivalent recompence, to be healthful, chearful, and honourable, and (which is more than all) *to be virtuous*, when thou art old.

The proposition then before us is this:

That a strict and virtuous education of youth, is absolutely necessary to a man's *attainment of that inestimable blessing, that unspeakable felicity of being serviceable to his God, easy to himself, and useful to others, in the whole course of his following life.*

In order to the proof of which, I shall lay down these six propositions.

I. That in the present state of nature, there is in every man a certain propensity to vice, or a corrupt principle more or less disposing him to evil. Which principle is sometimes called the *flesh*, sometimes *concupiscence*, and sometimes *sensuality*, and makes one part of that, which we call original sin. A principle, which though it both proceeds from sin, and disposes to sin, yet till it comes to act, the doctors of the *Romish* church deny to be in itself sinful. And the *Pelagians* deny that there is any such thing at all; especially our modern, orthodox, and more authentick *Pelagians*. For though our church indeed in her *ninth article* positively and expressly asserts both; yet there having been given us, not
very

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very long since, a new and more correct draught of *discipline*, to reconcile us to the *Schismatics*; it is not impossible but that in time we may have a new draught of *doctrine* also, to reconcile us to the *Socinians*.

II. The second proposition is this, That the forementioned propensity of the sensual part, or principle, to vice, being left to itself, will certainly proceed to work, and to exert itself in action; and, if not hindred, and counteracted, will continue so to do; till practice passes into custom or habit, and so by use and frequency comes to acquire a domineering strength in a man's conversation.

III. The *third* proposition is, That all the disorders of the world, and the confusions that disturb persons, families, and whole societies, or corporations, proceed from this natural propensity to vice in particular persons, which being thus heighten'd by habitual practice, runs forth into those several sorts of vice, which corrupt and spoil the manners of men. *Whence come wars, and fightings?* says the Apostle, James iv. 1. *Come they not hence, even from your lusts that war in your members?* And indeed, it is hard to assign any mischief befalling mankind, but what proceeds from some extravagance, either of passion, or desire;
fire;

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fire; from lust, or anger, covetousness, or ambition.

IV. The *fourth* proposition is, That, when the corruption of men's manners, by the habitual improvement of this vicious principle, comes from personal to be general and universal, so as to diffuse and spread itself over a whole community; it naturally and directly tends to the ruin and subversion of the government, where it so prevails: So that *Machiavel* himself, (a person never likely to die for love of virtue or religion) affirms over and over in his political discourses upon *Livy*: *That where the manners of a people are generally corrupted, there the government cannot long subsist.* I say, he affirms it, as a stated, allowed principle; and I doubt not, but the destruction of governments may be proved and deduced from the general corruption of the subjects manners, as a direct and natural cause thereof, by a demonstration as certain as any in the mathematics, though not so evident; for that, I confess, the nature of the thing may not allow.

V. The *fifth* proposition is, That this ill principle, which being thus habitually improved, and from personal corruptions spreading into general, and national, is the cause of all the mischiefs and disorders, publick and private, which trouble and infect the world, is to be

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altered and corrected only by discipline, and the infusion of such principles into the rational and spiritual part of man, as may powerfully sway his will and affections, by convincing his understanding, that the practice of virtue is preferable to that of vice; and that there is a real happiness, as well as honesty in the one, and a real misery, as well as a turpitude in the other; there being no mending or working upon the sensual part, but by well principling the intellectual.

VI. The *sixth* and last proposition is, That this discipline and infusion of good principles into the mind, which only can, and must work this great and happy change upon a man's morals, by counterworking that other sensual and vicious principle, which would corrupt them, can never operate so kindly, so efficaciously, and by consequence, so successfully, as when apply'd to him in his *minority*, while his mind is ductile and tender, and so ready for any good impression. For when he comes once to be in years, and his mind having been prepossessed with ill principles, and afterwards harden'd with ill practices, grows callous, and scarce penetrable, his case will be then very different, and the success of such applications very doubtful, if not desperate.

Now

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Now the sum of these six propositions in short is this: That there is in every man naturally, (as nature *now stands*) a *sensual* principle disposing him to evil. That this principle will be sure, more or less, to pass into action; and, if not hinder'd, to produce vicious habits and customs. That these vicious habits are the direct causes of all the miseries and calamities that afflict and disturb mankind. That when they come to spread so far, as from personal, to grow national, they will weaken, and at length destroy governments. That this ill principle is controulable and conquerable only by *discipline*, and the infusion of good and contrary principles into the mind. And lastly, That this discipline or infusion of good principles, is never like to have its full force, efficacy, and success, upon the *minds of men*, but *during their youth*.

Which whole deduction or chain of propositions proceeding upon so firm and natural, and withal so clear and evident a connexion of each proposition with the other; I suppose, there can need no farther demonstration to prove it as absolutely necessary, as the peace of mankind, publick and private, can be, that the minds of youth should be formed and seasoned with a strict and virtuous, and early and preventing education.

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Let us now in the next place see, who they are, whose province it is to be so great a blessing to society, so vast a benefit to the world, as to be the managers of this important trust.

And we shall find that it rests upon three sorts of men, *viz.*

1. Parents. 2. School-masters. And 3. The Clergy; such especially as have cure of souls.

1. And first for Parents. Let them endeavour to deserve that *Honour*, which God has commanded their children to pay them; and believe it, that must be by greater and better offices, than barely bringing them into this world; which of itself puts them only in danger of passing into a worse. And as the good old sentence tells us; that it is better a great deal to be *unborn*, than either *unbred*, or *bred amiss*; so it cannot but be matter of very sad reflexion to any parent, to think with himself that he should be instrumental to give his child a *body* only to damn *his soul*. And therefore let parents remember, that as the *paternal* is the most honourable *Relation*, so it is also the greatest *Trust* in the world, and that God will be a certain and severe exactor of it; and the more so, because they have such mighty opportunities to discharge it, and that with almost infallible success. Forasmuch as a parent receives his child, from the hand of God and nature,

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nature, a *perfect Blank*, a mere *Rasa Tabula*, as to any guilt actually contracted by him, and consequently may write upon him what he pleases; having the unvaluable advantage of making the first impressions, which are of so strong and so prevailing an influence to determine the practice either to vice or virtue, that *Buxtorf* in the third chapter of his *Synagoga Judaica* tells us, that the *Jewish* fathers professedly take upon themselves the guilt of all their childrens sins till they come to be *thirteen years old*; at which age the youth is called *Filius Præcepti*, as being then reckoned under the obligation of the law, and so by a solemn discharge left *to sin for himself*.

Now these and the like considerations (one would think) should remind Parents, what a dreadful account lies upon them for their children; and that, as their children by the laws of God and man, owe them the greatest reverence; so there is a sort of *Reverence* also, that they, as much, owe their *children*. A reverence, that should make them not dare to speak a filthy word, or to do a base or an undecent action before them. What says our Saviour to this point? *Mat. xviii. 6. Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him, that a mill-stone were hang'd about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the*
C 3 *sea,*

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sea. And surely he, who teaches these little ones to *offend God*, *offends them* with a witness; indeed so unmercifully, that it would be much the less cruelty of the two, if the wretch their father should stab or stifle those poor innocents in their *nurses* arms. For then he might damn himself alone, and not his children also; and himself, for his own sins only, and not for theirs too.

And therefore with all imaginable concern of conscience, let parents make it their business to infuse into their childrens hearts early and good principles of morality. Let them teach them from their very cradle, to think and speak awfully of the great God, reverently of religion, and respectfully of the dispensers of it; it being no part of religion any where, but *within the four seas*, to despise and scoff at the *ministers* of it. But above all, next to their duty to *God himself*, let them be carefully taught their duty to *their King*; and not so much as to pretend to the *fear* of the one, without the *honour* of the other; let them be taught full and absolute (so far as legal) obedience and subjection to him (in all things lawful;) the true and glorious characteristick of the church of *England*; for I know no church else, where you will be sure to find it. And to this end, let parents be continually instilling
into

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into their childrens minds a mortal and implacable hatred of those twin plagues of Christendom, *Fanaticism* and *Rebellion*; which cannot be more compendiously, and withal more effectually done, than by displaying to them the late unparalleled Rebellion, in its flaming and true colours.

For this was the method, which God himself prescribed to his own people, to perpetuate the remembrance of any great and notable providence towards them; and particularly in the institution of the prime instance of their religion, the passover, *Exod. xii. 26, 27.* *And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, what mean you by this service? that you shall say, It is the Lord's passover; who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our fathers, &c.* So say I to all true *English* parents. When your children shall ask you, Why do you keep the *thirtieth of January* as a fast? and the *twenty-ninth of May* as a festival? What mean you by this service? Then is the time to rip up, and lay before them the tragical history of the late Rebellion, and unnatural Civil War. A War commenced without the least shadow or pretence of right; as being notoriously against all law. A War begun without any provocation, as being

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ing against the justest, the mildest and most pious Prince, that had ever reigned. A War raised upon clamours of grievances; while the subject swam in greater plenty and riches than had ever been known in these islands before; and no grievances to be found in the three kingdoms, besides the persons who cry'd out of them. *Next* to this, let them tell their children over and over, of the villainous imprisonments, and contumelious tryal, and the barbarous murder of that blessed and royal Martyr, by a company of *cobblers, taylors, draymen, drunkards, whoremongers, and broken tradesmen*; though since, I confess, dignify'd with the title of the *sober part of the nation*: These, I say, were the illustrious judges of that great monarch. Whereas the whole people of *England*, nobles, and commons together, neither in Parliament, nor out of Parliament, (as that * great judge in the tryal of the regicides affirmed) had power by law to touch one hair of his head, or judicially to call him to account for any of his actions. *And* then in the last place, they are to tell their children also of the base and brutish cruelties practis'd by those blood-hounds in the *plunders, sequestrations, decimations, and murders* of their poor fellow-subjects: *likewise* of their *horrid oaths, covenants,*

* Sir Orlando Bridgman, Lord Chief Baron.

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covenants, and perjuries; and of their shameless, insatiable, and sacrilegious avarice, in destroying the purest church in the world, and seizing its revenues: and all this under the highest pretences of zeal for religion, and with the most solemn appeals to the great God, while they were actually spitting in his face.

These things, I say, and a thousand more, they are to be perpetually inculcating into the minds of their children, according to that strict injunction of God himself to the *Israelites*, Deut. vi. 6, 7, 8. *These words shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt diligently teach them thy children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.* Such discourses should open their eyes in the morning, and close them in the evening. And I dare undertake, that if this one thing had been faithfully and constantly practised, even but since the late Restoration (which came upon these poor kingdoms like life from the dead) the Fanaticks had never been so considerable, as to cause those terrible convulsions in church and state, and those misunderstandings between the King and his people, which we have seen and trembled at, and must expect to see, as long as the same spirit, which governed in Forty-one, continues still so powerful

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erful (as it does) amongst us. For, I am sure, no *King* and *That*, can ever *reign* quietly together.

But some, perhaps, may here very sagely object; Is not this the way to sour and spoil the minds of children, by keeping the remembrance of the late Rebellion always fresh upon them? I answer, No; no more than to warn them against poisons, pits and precipices, is likely to endanger their lives; or to tell them by what ill courses men come to the gallows, is the ready way to bring them thither. No; nothing can be too much hated by *children*, which cannot be too much avoided by *men*. And since vice never loses its hold, where it keeps its reputation, the minds of youth can never be sufficiently fortify'd against villainous and base actions, but by a deep and early abhorrence, caused by a faithful representation of them. So preposterous a method will it be found to bring a crime out of *fashion*, by making panegyrics upon the criminal.

In short, let parents prevent and seize the very first notions and affections of their children, by engaging them, from the very first, in an hatred of Rebellion; and that, if possible, as strong as nature, as irreconcilable as antipathy; and so early, that they themselves may not remember when it began, but that,
for

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for ought they know, it was even born with them. Let them, I say, be made almost from their very cradle to hate it, *name* and *thing*; so that their blood may rise, and their heart may swell at the very mention of it. In a word, let them by a kind of preventing instinct abhor it, even in their *minority*, and they will be sure to find sufficient reason for that abhorrence, when they shall come to *maturity*. And so much for Parents.

2. *The second* sort of persons entrusted with the training up of youth, are *School-masters*. I know not how it comes to pass, that this honourable employment should find so little respect (as experience shews it does) from too many in the world. For there is no profession which has, or can have a greater influence upon the publick. School-masters have a *negative* upon the peace and welfare of the kingdom. They are indeed the great *depositories and trustees* of the peace of it; as having the growing hopes and fears of the nation in their hands. For generally, subjects are, and will be such, as they breed them. So that I look upon an able, well-principled School-master, as one of the most meritorious subjects in any prince's dominions, that can be; and every such *school* under such a master,

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as a *seminary of Loyalty*, and a *nursery of Allegiance*.

Nay, I take School-masters to have a more powerful influence upon the spirits of men, than preachers themselves. Forasmuch as they have to deal with younger and tenderer minds, and consequently have the advantage of making the first and deepest impressions upon them. It being seldom found, that the pulpit *mends*, what the school has *marred*; any more than a fault in the *first concoction*, is ever corrected by the *second*.

But now, if their power is so great, and their influence so strong, surely it concerns them to use it to the utmost, for the benefit of their country. And for this purpose, let them fix this as an eternal rule or principle, in the instruction of youth; that *care* is to be had of their *Manners* in the first place, and of their *Learning* in the next. And here, as the foundation and ground-work of all morality, let youth be taught betimes to *obey*, and to know, that the very relation between *teacher* and *learner*, imports *superiority* and *subjection*. And therefore, let masters be sure to inure young minds to an early awe and reverence of government, by making the first instance of it in themselves, and maintaining the authority of a *master* over them, sacred and inviolable;
still

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still remembering, that none is, or can be fit to be a *teacher*, who understands not how to be a master. For every degree of obstinacy in youth is one step to rebellion. And the very same restive humour, which makes a young man slight his *master* in the school, and despise his *tutor* in the university, (a thing lately much in fashion) will make him fly in his prince's face in the Parliament-house. Of which, not many years since, we have had some scurvy experiments.

There is a principle of pride universally wrapt up in the corrupt nature of man. And pride is naturally refractory, and impatient of rule; and (which is most material to our present case) it is a vice, which works and puts forth betimes; and consequently must be encounter'd so too, or it will quickly carry too *high an head*, or too *stiff a neck* to be controul'd. It is the certain companion of folly; and both of them the proper qualifications of youth; it being the inseparable property of that age to be *proud* and *ignorant*, and to despise instruction, the more it *needs* it. But both of them are nufances which education must remove, or the person is lost.

And it were to be wish'd, I confess, that the constitution of man's nature were such, that this might be done only by the mild addresses of reason, and the gentle arts of persuasion;

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sion; and that the studies of *Humanity* might be carried on only by the ways of *Humanity*: but, unless youth were all made up of goodness and ingenuity, this is a felicity not to be hoped for. And therefore it is certain, that in some cases, and with some natures, austerity must be used: there being too frequently such a mixture in the composition of youth, that while the *Man* is to be *instructed*, there is something of the *Brute* also to be *chastised*.

But how to do this discreetly, and to the benefit of him who is so unhappy as to need it, requires, in my poor opinion, a greater skill, judgment and experience, than the world generally imagines, and than, I am sure, most *masters of schools* can truly pretend to be *masters* of. I mean those *Plagosi Orbiliij*, those executioners, rather than instructors of youth; persons fitter to lay about them in a coach or cart, or to *discipline boys before a Spartan Altar*, or rather *upon it*, than to have any thing to do in a christian school. I would give those pedagogical *Jehu's*, those furious *school-drivers* the same advice, which the poet says, *Phæbus* gave his son *Phaëton*, (just such another driver as themselves) that he should *parcere Stimulis* (the *Stimulus* in driving being of the same use formerly that the *Lasb* is now.) Stripes and blows are the last and basest remedy, and scarce

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ever fit to be used, but upon such as carry their brains in their backs; and have souls so dull and stupid, as to serve for little else but to keep their bodies from putrefaction.

Nevertheless, since (as I have shewn) there are some cases and tempers, which make these boisterous applications necessary; give me leave, for once, to step out of my profession so far (though still keeping strictly within my subject) as to lay before the educators of youth, these few following considerations; for I shall not in modesty call them *Instructions*.

1. As first, let them remember that excellent and never to be forgotten advice, *that Boys will be Men*; and that the memory of all base usage will sink so deep into, and grow up so inseparably with them, that it will not be so much as *in their own power* ever to forget it. For though indeed School-masters are a sort of kings, yet they cannot always pass such acts of *Oblivion*, as shall operate upon their scholars; or perhaps (in all things) *indemnify* themselves.

2. Where they find a youth of spirit, let them endeavour to *govern that spirit, without extinguishing it*; to *bend it, without breaking it*; for when it comes once to be extinguished and broken, and lost, it is not in the power or art of man to recover it: And then (believe it)

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it) no knowledge of *Nouns* and *Pronouns*, *Syntaxis*, and *Prosodia*, can ever compensate or make amends for such a loss. The *French*, they say, are extremely happy at this, who will instruct a youth of *spirit* to a *decent boldness*, tempered with a due modesty; which two qualities in conjunction, do, above all others, fit a man both for business and address. But for want of this art, some schools have ruined more good Wits than they have improved; and even those which they have sent away with some tolerable improvement, like men escap'd from a shipwreck, carry off only the remainder of those natural advantages, which in much greater plenty *they first brought with them.*

3. Let not the chastisement of the body be managed so, as to make a wound, which shall rankle and fester in the very soul. That is, let not children, whom nature itself would bear up by an innate, generous principle of emulation, be exposed, cow'd, and depressed with *scoffs* and *contumelies* (founded perhaps upon the master's own guilt) to the *scorn* and contempt of their equals and emulators. For this is, instead of *Rods*, to chastise them with *Scorpions*; and is the most direct way to stupify and besot, and make them utterly regardless of themselves, and of all that is praise-worthy:
besides

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besides that it will be sure to leave in their minds such inward regrets, as are never to be qualify'd or worn off. It is very undecent for a master to jest or play with his scholars; but not only undecent, but very dangerous too, in such a way to play upon them.

4. And lastly; Let it appear in all acts of penal animadversion, that the *person* is loved while his fault is *punished*; nay, that one is punished only out of love to the other. And (believe it) there is hardly any one so much a *child*, but has sagacity enough to perceive this. Let no *melancholy fumes and spights*, and secret animosities pass for discipline. Let the master be as angry for the boy's fault, as reason will allow him; but let not the boy be in fault, only because the master has a mind to be angry. In a word, let not the master have the *spleen*, and the scholars be *troubled* with it. But above all, let not the sins, or faults, or *wants* of the parents be punished upon the children; for that is a prerogative which God has reserved to himself.

These things I thought fit to remark, about the education, and educators of youth in general, not that I have any thoughts or desires of invading their province; but possibly a stander by may sometimes look as far into the game,

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as he who plays it; and perhaps with no *less judgment*, because with *much less concern*.

3. The third and last sort of persons concerned in the great charge of instructing youth, are the Clergy. For as parents deliver their children to the school-master, so the school-master delivers them to the Minister. And for my own part, I never thought a *pulpit*, a *cushion*, and an *hour-glass*, such necessary means of salvation, but that much of the time and labour which is spent about them, might be much more profitably bestowed, in catechizing youth from the *desk*: *Preaching* being a kind of spiritual *diet*, upon which people are always feeding, but never full; and many poor souls, (God knows) too, too like *Pharaoh's lean kine*, much the *leaner for their full feed*.

And how, for God's sake, should it be otherwise! For to preach to people without principles, is to build where there is no foundation, or rather where there is not so much as *ground* to build upon. But people are not to be harangued, but catechized into principles; and this is not the proper work of the pulpit, any more than *threshing* can pass for *sowing*. Young minds are to be leisurely formed and fashioned with the first, plain, simple, and substantial rudiments of Religion. And to expect that this should be done by preaching or *force of lungs*,

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lungs, is just as if a smith or artist who works in metal, should think to frame and shape out his work only with *his bellows*.

It is want of catechizing, which has been the true cause of those numerous sects, schisms, and wild opinions, which have so disturbed the peace, and bid fair to destroy the religion of the nation. For the consciences of men have been filled with wind and noise, empty notions and pulpit-tattle. So that amongst the most seraphical *Illuminati*, and the highest *Puritan Perfectionists*, you shall find people, of fifty, threescore, and fourscore years old, not able to give that account of their faith, which you might have had heretofore of a boy of nine or ten. Thus far had the *pulpit* (by accident) disordered the Church, and the *desk* must restore it. For you know the main business of the pulpit in the late times (which we are not thoroughly recovered from yet, and perhaps never shall) was to please and pamper a proud, senseless humour, or rather a kind of spiritual itch, which had then seiz'd the greatest part of the nation, and worked chiefly about their *ears*; and none were so over-run with it, as the holy *sisterhood*, the *daughters of Sion*, and the *matrons of the new Jerusalem* (as they called themselves.) These brought with them *ignorance* and *itching ears* in abundance; and

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bolder-forth equalled them in one, and gratified them in the other. So that whatsoever the doctrine was, the *application still ran on the surest side*; for to give those *Doctrine and Use-men*, those *Pulpit-Engineers*, their due, they understood how to plant their batteries, and to make their attacks perfectly well; and knew that by pleasing the *Wife*, they should not fail to preach the *Husband* in their *pocket*. And therefore to prevent the success of such *pious frauds* for the future, let children be *well principled*, and in order to that let them be carefully *catechized*.

Well; but when they are thus catechized, what is to be done next? Why then let them be brought to the Bishop of the diocese to be *confirmed* by him, since none else, no not all the *Presbyters* of a diocese (nor Presbyterians neither) can perform this apostolical act and office upon them. For though indeed a bishop may be installed, and visit, and receive his revenues too, by deputation or proxy; yet I am sure he can no more *confirm* than ordain by proxy: these being acts purely and incommunicably *episcopal*.

The Church of *Rome* makes *Confirmation* a sacrament; and though the Church of *England* does not affirm it to be such, yet it owns it of *divine* and apostolical *institution*. And as to the necessity of it, I look upon it as no less than a completion of *Baptism* in such as outlive

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live their childhood; and for that cause called by the ancients *τελείωσις*. It is indeed a man's owing that debt in person, which passed upon him in his Baptism by *representation*; and his ratifying the promises of his sureties by his personal acknowledgment of the obligation.

It is also expressly instituted for the collation of those peculiar assistances and gifts of *the Spirit*, by the imposition of episcopal hands, which the Rubrick represents as requisite, to bear him through his christian course and conflict, with comfort and success. For till a person be *confirmed*, he cannot regularly and ordinarily partake of that high and soul-supporting ordinance, the *Sacrament* of the Lord's Supper. And these are the considerations which render the *Confirmation* of *children* necessary, and the neglect of it scandalous, unchristian, and utterly unjustifiable upon any account whatsoever. For is there so much as the least shadow of excuse alledgeable for parents not bringing their children to the bishop to be confirmed by him? or for the bishop not to confirm them when duly brought? The chief and general failure in this duty is no doubt chargeable upon the former; the grand Rebellion of *Forty-one*, and the dissolution of all Church-order thereupon, absolutely unhinging the minds of most of the nation, as to all

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concern about religion; nevertheless, if on the other side also, both the high importance of the ordinance itself, and the vast numbers of the persons whom it ought to pass upon, be duly pondered, it will be found next (at least) to a necessity (if at all short of it) that there should be episcopal visitations more than once in three years, if it were only for the sake of *confirmations*; especially since the judges of the land think it not too much for them to go two circuits yearly. And some are apt to think that no less care and labour ought to be employed in carrying on the discipline of the *Gospel*, than in dispensing the benefits of the *Law*. For certainly the importance of the former, with those who think mens souls ought to be regarded in the first place, is no ways inferior to that of the latter; at least many wise and good men of the clergy, as well as others (who hope they may lawfully *wish*, what they pretend not to *prescribe*) have thought the proposal not unreasonable. For *Confirmation* being (as we hinted before) the only proper, regular inlet, or rather authentick *ticket* of admission to the Lord's Supper, and yet withal the sole act of the bishop; if people who desire to obtain it, should find that they cannot, would they not be apt to think themselves hardly dealt with, that when Christ has frankly invited

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ted them to his table, they should for want of *Confirmation*, find the door shut against them, when they come?

Besides that nothing can be imagined more for the *episcopal Dignity* and *Prebeminence*, than that after Christ has thus prepared this heavenly feast for us, he yet leaves it to his bishops (by lodging this *confirming power* in their hands) to qualify and put us into a regular capacity of appearing at that divine banquet, and of being welcome, when we are there. And therefore in short, since the power of *confirming*, no less than that of *ordaining itself*, is (as we have shewn) so peculiar to the episcopal character, as to be also *personal* and incommunicable; all well-wishers to the happy estate of the church must needs *wish*, that, as the laws of it have put a considerable restraint upon *unlimited ordinations*, so they would equally enforce the frequency of *confirmations*; since a defect or desuetude of these *latter* must no less *starve* the altar, than a superfluity of the *former overstock* the church: both of them, I am sure, likely to prove fatal to it.

But to proceed; As the minister, having sufficiently catechized the youth of his parish, ought to tender them to the bishop to be confirmed by him; and the bishop, for his part,

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to give his clergy as frequent opportunities of doing so, as possibly he can; so after they are thus confirmed, he is to take them into the farther instructions of his ministry, and acquaint them with what they have been confirm'd in. And here, the better to acquit himself in this important trust, let him take a measure of what good the pulpit may do, by the mischief which it has *already done*. For in the late times of confusion, it was the *pulpit*, which supplied the *field with swordsmen*, and the parliament-house with incendiaries. And let every churchman consider, that it is one of the principal duties of the clergy to make the King's government easy to him, and prepare him a *willing and obedient people*. For which purpose, the canons of our church enjoin every minister of it to preach *obedience*, and *subjection* to the government, *four times a year* at least. And this, I am sure, cannot be better, and more effectually done, than by representing the faction, which troubles and undermines it, as odious, ridiculous, and unexcusable, as, with truth, he can; and by exposing those villanous tricks and intrigues, by which they supplanted and overturned the monarchy under King *Charles I.* and would have done the same again under King *Charles II.* though he had obliged them by a *mercy* not
to

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to be parallell'd, and an oblivion never to be
forgot.

Let every faithful minister therefore of the church of *England*, in a conscientious observance of the laws laid upon him by the said church, make it his business to undeceive and disabuse the people committed to his charge, by giving them to understand, that most of that noise, which they have so often heard ringing in their ears, *about grievances and arbitrary power, popery and tyranny, persecution and oppression of tender consciences, court-pensioners, and the like*, has been generally nothing else, but mere *flam and romance*; and that there is no kingdom or government in Christendom less chargeable with any of these odious things and practices, than the *English* government, under his present Majesty, both is, and ever has been; and consequently, that all these clamours are only the artifices of some malecontents, and ambitious demagogues, to fright their prince to compound with them, *by taking them off* (as the word is) with great and gainful places; and therefore, that they bark so loud, and open *their mouths* so wide, for no other cause than that some preferment may stop them: the common method, I own, by which *weak governors, and governments*, use to deal with such as oppose them; till in the
issue,

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issue, by strengthening their enemies, they come to ruin themselves, and to be laughed at for their pains. For that governor, whosoever he is, who prefers his enemy, makes him thereby not at all the less an *enemy*, but much more formidably so, than he was before.

And whereas yet farther, there have been such vehement invectives against *court-pensioners*; let the people, who have been so warmly plyed with this stuff, be carefully informed, that those very men, who raise and spread these invectives, do not indeed (as they pretend) hate *pensioners* so much, but that they love *pensions* more; and have no other quarrel to them, but that any should be thought worthy to receive them but themselves.

And then, as for the next clamour, about the persecution and *oppression of tender consciences*: Let every conscientious preacher thoroughly and impartially instruct his congregation, that there is no such thing; that from the very Restauration of the King, they have been all along allowed (and that by a law made for that purpose) to worship God after their own way in their own families with five more persons besides: so that all the oppression and persecution of these men amounts but to this, that the government will not suffer them to meet in *troops, regiments, and brigades*; and
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so form themselves into an army, and under colour of worshipping God, to muster their forces, and shew the government how ready they are, when occasion serves, for a battle: so that in truth it is not so much *liberty of conscience*, as *liberty from conscience*, which these men contend for. Likewise let the faithful minister teach his people that, as the main body of the nation hates and abhors popery with the utmost aversion; so that old stale pretence of the danger of its being every day ready to return and break in upon us, while this general aversion to it continues, and the laws against it stand in full force (as at present they certainly do) is all of it, from top to bottom, nothing else but an arrant trick and term of art, and a republican engine *to rob* the church, and run down the *clergy* (the surest bulwark against popery;) as the very *same plea* had effectually served them for the *same purpose* once before. And lastly, let the youth of the nation be made to know, that all the bustle and stir made by Schismatics and Dissenters, against the rites and ceremonies of the church of *England*, (which after so much noise are but three in number, and those not only very *innocent*, but very *rational* too) has been intended only for a blind and a cheat upon those lamentable *tools*, the unthinking rabble, whom

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these leading impostors are still *managing* and *despising* at the same time. For can any man of sense imagine, that those, whose conscience could serve them to murder their King, (and him the most innocent, and pious of Kings) do, or can really scruple the *use of the surplice*, the *cross in baptism*, or *kneeling at the sacrament*? Alas! they have a *cormorant* in their conscience, which can swallow all this, and a great deal more. But the thing they drive at by this noisy, restless cant, is to get the power and revenues of the church into their *comprehensive clutches*; and according to a neighbouring pattern, having first possessed themselves of the *church*, to make their next inroads upon the *state*. I say, it is *power*, and wealth, and nothing else, which these pretenders design, and push so hard for; and when they have once compassed it, you shall quickly see, how effectually these *men of mortification* will *mortify* all, who differ from them; and how little favour and *indulgence* they will shew those, who had shewed them so much before. Such is the cruelty and ingratitude of the party.

All which, and the like important heads of discourse, so nearly affecting not only the common interest, but the very vitals of the government, had the parochial clergy frequently
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and warmly insisted upon to their respective congregations, and to the *younger* part of them especially; such a course could not but, in a short time, have unpoisoned their perverted minds, and rectified their false notions, to such a degree, as would in all likelihood have prevented those high animosities, those divisions and discontents, which have given such terrible shocks both to church and state, since the late happy, but never yet duly improved, *Restoration*.

And now I must draw towards a close, though I have not dispatched the tenth part of what I had to say upon this useful, copious, and indeed inexhaustible subject. And therefore for a conclusion, I have only two things more to add, and by way of request to you, great men; you who are persons of honour, power and interest in the government; and, I hope, will shew to what great and good purposes you are so.

I. And the first is; That you would employ the utmost of this your *power* and *interest*, both with the King and Parliament, to suppress, utterly to suppress and extinguish, those private, blind, conventicling schools or academies of grammar and philosophy, set up and taught secretly by Fanaticks, here and there all the kingdom over. A practice, which, I will undertake to prove, looks with a more threat-

46 *Virtuous Education of Youth,*

threatning aspect upon the government, than any one fanatical or republican encroachment made upon it besides. For this is the direct and certain way to bring up, and perpetuate a race of mortal enemies both to church and state. To derive, propagate, and immortalize the principles and practices of *Forty-one* to posterity, is schism and sedition for ever, faction and rebellion *in sæcula sæculorum*; which I am sure no honest *English* heart will ever say *Amen* to. We have, I own, laws against conventicles; but believe it, it would be but labour in vain to go about to suppress them, while these nurseries of disobedience are suffered to continue. For those first and early aversions to the government, which these shall infuse into the minds of children, will be too strong for the clearest after-convictions, which can pass upon them, when they are men. So that what these under-ground workers have once planted a *bryar*, let no Governor think, that by all the arts of clemency and condescension, or any other cultivation whatsoever, he shall be able to change into a *rose*. Our ancestors, to their great honour, rid the nation of *wolves*, and it were well, if (notwithstanding their *sheeps cloathing*) the church could be rid of them too; but that neither will, nor can ever be, so long as they shall be suffered

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suffered to *breed up their litters* amongst us. Good God! Can all history shew us any church or state since the creation, that has been able to settle or support itself by such methods? I can, I thank God (looking both him and my conscience in the face) solemnly and seriously affirm, that I abhor every thing like cruelty to mens persons, as much as any man breathing does, or can; but for all that, the government must not be ruined, nor *private* interests *served* to the detriment of the *publick*, though upon the most plausible pretences whatsoever. And therefore it will certainly concern the whole nobility, gentry, and all the sober commonality of the nation, for the sake of God, their prince, their country, and their own dear posterity, to lay this important matter to heart. For unless these * lurking subterraneous nests of disloyalty and schism be utterly broken up, and dismantled, all that the power and wit of man can do to secure the government against that faction, which once destroyed it, will signify just nothing. It will be but as the pumping of a *leaky vessel*, which
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* The reader is desired to cast his eye upon a printed piece, entituled, *a letter from a country divine to his friend in London, concerning the education of the dissenters, in their private academies, in several parts of this nation; humbly offered to the consideration of the grand committee of Parliament for religion, now sitting.* Printed at London for Robert Clavell in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1703.

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will be sure to sink for all that, when the devouring element is still soaking and working in an hundred undiscerned *holes*, while it is cast out only at one.

2. My other request to you, great men, is, That you would, in your respective stations, countenance all legal, allowed, *free grammar-schools*, by causing (as much as in you lies) the youth of the nation to be bred up *there*, and no *where* else; there being sometimes, and in some respects, as much reason why parents should not *breed*, as why they should not *baptize* their children at *home*.

But chiefly, and in the first place, let your kind and generous influences upon all occasions descend upon this royal and illustrious school, the happy place of your education. A school, which neither disposes men to division in church, nor sedition in state; tho' too often found the readiest way (for *churchmen* especially) to thrive by; but trains up her sons and scholars to an invincible loyalty to their prince, and a strict, impartial conformity to the church. A school so untaintedly loyal, that I can truly and knowingly aver, that in the very worst of times (in which it was my lot to be a member of it) we really were *king's scholars*, as well as *called so*. Nay, upon that very day, that black and eternally infamous day of
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the King's murder, I myself heard, and am now a witness, that the King was publickly pray'd for in this school, but an hour or two (at most) before his sacred head was struck off. And this loyal genius always continued amongst us, and grew up with us; which made that noted * *Corypheus* of the independent faction, (and some time after, viz. 1651, promoted by Cromwell's interest to the deanery of Christ-Church in Oxford) often say, *That it would never be well with the nation, till this school was suppressed; for that it naturally bred men up to an opposition to the government.* And so far indeed he was in the right: For it did breed up people to an opposition to that government, which had opposed and destroyed all governments besides itself; nay, and even itself too at last; which was the only good thing it ever did. But if in those days, some four or five bred up in this school, (though not under this master) did unworthily turn aside to other by-ways and principles; we can however truly say this of them, *That though they went out from us, yet they were never of us.* For still the school itself made good its claim to that glorious motto of its royal foundress, *Semper Eadem*; the temper and genius of it, being

* Dr. John Owen.

50 *Virtuous Education of Youth,*

neither to be corrupted with *promises*, nor controuled with *threats*.

For though, indeed, we had some of those fellows for our *governors*, (as they called themselves) yet thanks be to God, they were never our *teachers*; no, not so much as when they would have perverted us from the *pulpit*. I myself, while a scholar here, have heard a * prime preacher of those times, thus addressing himself from this very pulpit, to the *leading Grandees* of the faction in the pew under it: *You stood up* (says he) *for your liberties, and you did well*. And what he meant by their *liberties*, and what by their *standing up for them*, I suppose, needs no explication. But though our ears were still encountred with such doctrines in the *church*, it was our happiness to be taught other doctrine in the *school*; and what we drank in *there*, proved an effectual antidote against the *poison* prepared for us † *here*.

And therefore, as *Alexander the Great* admonished one of his soldiers (of the same name with himself) still to remember that his name was *Alexander*, and to behave himself accordingly; so, I hope, our school has all along behaved itself suitably to the *royal* name and

* Mr. *William Strong*.

† Viz. *Westminster-Abbey*, where this sermon was appointed to have been preached.

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title which it bears; and that it will make the same *August Name*, the standing rule of all its actings and proceedings for ever; still remembering with itself, that it is called the *King's school*, and therefore let nothing arbitrary or tyrannical be practised in it, whatsoever has been practised *against* it. Again, it is the *King's school*, and therefore let nothing but what is loyal come out of it, or be found in it; let it not be so much as tinged with any thing, which is either *Republican* or *Fanatical*; that so the whole nation may have cause to wish, that the *King* may never want *such a school*, nor the *nation* may ever want *such a King*. A prince, great in every thing, which deserves to be accounted *Great*; a Prince, who has some of all the christian *Royal Blood* in *Europe* running in his veins; so that to be a prince, is only another word for being of *kin to him*: who, though he is the princely center of so many *royal lines*, meeting in his illustrious person; is yet greater for his *qualifications*, than for his *extraction*; and upon both accounts much likelier to be *envied*, than *equalled* by any, or all the princes about him. In a word, and to conclude all; a prince so deservedly dear to such, as truly love their country and the prosperity of it, that, could it be warrantable to pray for the perpetuity of his *life a-*

52 *Virtuous Education of Youth, &c.*

mongst us, and reign over us, we could not do it in words more proper and significant for that purpose, than that God would vouchsafe to preserve the one, and continue the other, till we should desire to see a change of either.

To which God, the great King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, be rendered and ascribed, as is most due, all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.

Pretence

*Pretence of CONSCIENCE, no Excuse
for Rebellion.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before

King *CHARLES II.*

At his Chapel in *Whitehall*, on the
Thirtieth Day of *Jan.* 166 $\frac{1}{3}$.

Being the Anniversary for the *Execrable Murder*
of the late King *CHARLES I.*
of Glorious Memory.

To the Illustrious, Blessed, and Never-
Dying Memory

O F

CHARLES I.

King of *Great Britain, France* and
Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.

Causlessly Rebelled against, 'unhumanly im-
prison'd, and at length barbarously mur-
der'd before the gates of his own Palace, by
the worst of men, and the most obliged of
subjects,

SERMON II.

Pretence of CONSCIENCE, no
Excuse for Rebellion.

JUDGES xix. 30.

And it was so, that all that saw it, said, there was no such deed done or seen, from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt, unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.

THE Occasion of these words was a foul and detestable fact, which had happen'd in one of the tribes of *Israel*; and the occasion of that fact was (as the text not obscurely intimates) the want of *kingly government* amongst the *Israelites* at that time. It being noted as

56 *Pretence of Conscience,*

a thing of particular remark in *Judges xxi.* and the *last*, that this villany was committed, *when there was no King in Israel*; and when (as a natural consequent thereof) men resolved to live *at large*; every one, without check or controul, doing (as the text tells us) *what was right in his own eyes*; or (according to the more sanctify'd language of our late times) *as the spirit moved him*. Such a *liberty of conscience* (it seems) had they then got, *for serving the devil after his and their own way*.

As for the infamous actors in this tragical scene, we have them boldly owning their shameless fact in open field, avowing it with sword in hand; and for some time defending the same with victory and success, against their brethren, then the peculiar people and church of God, twice routed and slaughtered before them in a righteous cause; a cause managed by all the rest of the tribes engaged in it, and that not more with the proper arms of war in one hand, than with a commission from God himself in the other. In which, and the like respects, so great a resemblance must needs be acknowledged between this and the late Civil War amongst ourselves here in *England*; that the proceedings of *Forty-one*, and some of the following years, may well pass for the *devil's works in a second edition*, or a foul and odious
copy,

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copy, much exceeding the foulness of the *original*.

I profess not my self either skilled, or delighted, in mystical interpretations of scripture; nor am I for forcing, or wiredrawing the sense of the text, so as to make it designedly foretell the King's death and murder; nor to make *England, Scotland and Ireland*, (as some enthusiasts have done) the adequate scene for the prophetick spirit to declare future events upon; as if (forsooth) there could not be so much as a few houses fired, a few ships taken, or any other calamitous accident befall this little corner of the world, but that some apocalyptick *ignoramus* or other must presently find and pick it out of some abused, martyred prophecy of *Ezekiel, Daniel, or the Revelation*. No, I pretend not to any such illuminations. I am neither *prophet*, nor *prophetick prelate*, but account it enough for my purpose, if I can bring my present business and the text together, not by *design*, but *accommodation*; and as the words themselves are very apposite and *expressive*, so I doubt not but to find such a parallel in the things expressed by them, that it may be a question, whether the subject of the text, or of this *mournful day*, may have a better claim to the *expression*.

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The crime here set off with such high aggravations, was an injury done to one single *Levite*, in the villanous rape of his concubine; a surprizing passage, I confess, to us, who have lived in times enlightening men to the utmost hatred and *contempt of the ministry*, as a principal part (or rather whole) of *their religion*: Nevertheless we see how, even in those *dark times of the law*, (as our late saints used to call them) the resentment of the wrong done to *this poor Levite* rose so high, that it was looked upon as a sufficient ground for a *Civil War*; and accordingly made the concern of all *Israel*, to revenge this quarrel upon the whole tribe of *Benjamin*, for abetting the villany. This was the unanimous judgment of the eleven tribes, and a war was hereupon declared; in which the conduct and preheminance was by divine designation appointed to the *Royal Tribe of Judah*; the *sceptre* being judged by God himself most concerned to assert the privileges of, and revenge the injuries done the *Crozier*; the Crown to support the *Mitre*; and in a word, the *sovereign* authority to vindicate and abet the *sacerdotal*, as well as to be blessed by it.

But now, to come to the counterpart of the story, or the application of it to our present case. He who dates the murder of King

Charles

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Charles the first from the fatal blow given upon the scaffold, judges like him who thinks, that it is only the last stroke which fells the tree. No, the *killing of his person* was but the consummation of the *murder first begun in his prerogative*. And *Pym*, and some like him, did as really give a stroke towards the cutting down this royal oak, as *Ireton* or *Cromwell* himself. Few, I believe, but have heard of that superfine, applauded invention of theirs, of a *double capacity* in the king, *personal* and *political*. And, I suppose, the two noted factions, which then carried all before them, distinguish'd in him these two, that so to keep pace with one another, each of them might destroy *him under one*.

For as for * those, whose *post-dated* loyalty now consists only in decrying that *action*, which had been taken out of their hands by others more cunning, though no less wicked than themselves; who having laid the premisses, afterwards ridiculously protest against the conclusion; they do but cover their prevarication with a fig-leaf, there being no more difference between both parties, but only this, that the former used all their art, skill and industry to give these infamous contrivers of this murder the best colour and
disguise

* The Presbyterian Faction.

disguise they could; whereas their younger brother, the independent, thought it the safest and surest way, to *disguise* only the *executioner*.

Well then, when a long sunshine of mercy had ripened the sins of the nation, so that it was now ready for the shakings of divine vengeance, the seeds of faction and rebellion having for a long time been studiously sow'd by *seditious libels*, and well watered with *schismatical lectures*; the first assault was made against the clergy, by a pack of inveterate avowed enemies to the church, the fury of whose lust and ambition nothing could allay, but a full power and liberty, (which they quickly got) to seize her privileges, prostitute her honours, and ravish her revenues; till at length being thus *mangled, divided and broken in pieces*, (as the *Levite's* concubine was before her) she became a ghastly spectacle to all beholders, to all the *Israel* of God.

Such therefore was then the woful condition of our church and clergy, upon the Puritans invasion of their rights, at the breaking out of the late civil war. In which (as we hinted before in the *Levite's* case) so amongst ourselves also, the cause of our oppressed church was owned, and sheltered by the royal

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royal standard, and the defence of the *ministry* (as most properly it should be) managed by the *defender of the faith*. But, alas! the same angry providence still pursuing the best of kings and causes, with defeat after defeat, the *lion* falling before the *wolf*, as *Judah* (the royal tribe) sometimes did before *Benjamin*, the King himself came to be in effect first unking'd, and all his royalties torn from him, before the year *forty-five*; and then at last, to compleat the whole tragedy in his *person*, as well as *office*, *Charles* was murdered in *forty-eight*.

And this is the black subject and occasion of this day's solemnity. In my reflexions upon which, if a just indignation, or indeed even a due apprehension of the blackest fact, which the sun ever saw, since he hid his face upon the crucifixion of our Saviour, chance to give an edge to some of my expressions, let all such know, the guilt of whose actions has made the very strictest truths look like satyrs, or sarcasms, and bare descriptions sharper than invectives; I say, let such censurers (whose innocence lies only in their indemnity) know, that to drop the blackest ink, and the bitterest gall upon this fact, is not satyr, but propriety.

And now, since the Text here represents the whole matter set forth in it, in these most signi-

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significant and remarkable words; *that there was no such deed done or seen, for many ages before*; and with which words I shall clothe the sad subject before us; I conceive the most proper prosecution thereof, as applied to this occasion, will be to shew wherein the unparalleled strangeness of this deed consists. And for this, since the nature is not to be accounted for, but from a due consideration of the agent, the object, and all that retinue of *circumstances*, which do attend, and specify it under a certain *denomination*, I shall accordingly distribute my discourse into these materials.

1. I shall consider the person that suffered.
2. I shall shew the preparation and introduction to his suffering.
3. Shew the quality of the agents who acted in it.
4. Describe the circumstances and manner of the fact. And
5. Point out the dismal and destructive consequences of it.

Of all which in their order; and

1. For the first of them: *the person suffering*. He was a *King*; and what is more, *such a King*, not *chosen*, but *born to be so*; that is, not owing his kingdom to the vogue of the populace, but to the suffrage of na-

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ture. He was a *David*, a *Saint*, a *King*; but never a *Shepherd*. Some of all the royal blood in Christendom ran in his veins, that is to say, *many Kings* went to the making of *this one*.

And his improvements and education fell no ways below his extraction. He was accurate in all the recommending excellencies of human accomplishments, able to *deserve*, had he not *inherited* a kingdom; of so controuling a genius, that in every science he attempted, he did not so much *study*, as *reign*; and appeared not only a *proficient*, but a *prince*. And to go no farther for a testimony; let his own writings witness so much, which speak him no less an *author*, than a *monarch*; composed with such an un-failing accuracy, such a commanding majestic *pathos*, as if they had been writ not with a *pen*, but with a *sceptre*. And for those, whose virulent and ridiculous calumnies ascribe that incomparable piece to others, I say, it is a sufficient argument that those *did* not write it, because they *could not* write it. It is hard to counterfeit the spirit of majesty, and the unimitable peculiarities of an incommunicable genius and condition.

At the council-board he had the ability, still to give himself the best council, but the
unhappy

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unhappy modesty, to diffide in it; indeed his only fault: for modesty is a paradox in majesty, and humility a solœcism in supremacy.

Look we next upon his piety and unparalleled virtues; though without an absurdity, I may affirm, that his very endowments of nature were supernatural. So pious was he, that had others measured their obedience to him by his obedience to God, he had been the must absolute monarch in the world; as eminent for frequenting the temple, as *Solomon* for building one. No occasions ever interfered with his devotions, nor business of state ate out his times of attendance in the church. So firm to the Protestant Cause, though he conversed in the midst of temptation, in the very bosom of *Spain*, and though *France* lay in *his*, yet nothing could alter him, but that he espoused the cause of religion, even more than his beloved queen.

He every way filled the title, under which we prayed for him. He could defend his religion as a King, dispute for it as a Divine, and die for it as a Martyr. I think I shall speak a great truth, if I say, that the only thing that makes protestantism considerable in Christendom, is the church of *England*; and the great thing that does now cement and confirm

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firm the church of *England*, is the blood of this blessed saint.

He was so skilled in all controversies, that we may well style him in all causes ecclesiastical, not only supreme *governor*, but *moderator*, nor more fit to fill the *throne* than the *chair*; and withal so exact an observer, and royal a rewarder of all such performances, that it was an encouragement to a man *to be a divine* under such a *prince*.

Which eminent piety of his was set off with the whole train of moral virtues. His temperance was so great and impregnable, amidst all those allurements, with which the courts of Kings are apt to melt even the most stoical and resolved minds, that he did at the same time both teach and upbraid the court; so that it was not so much their own vice, as his example, that render'd their debauchery inexcusable. Look over the whole list of our Kings, and take in the Kings of *Israel* to boot, and who ever kept the bond of conjugal affection so inviolate? *David* was chiefly eminent for repenting in this matter, *Charles* for not needing repentance. None ever of greater fortitude of mind, which was more resplendent in the conquest of himself, and in those miraculous instances of passive valour, than if he had strewed the field with

all the rebels armies, and to the justness of his own cause joined the success of theirs. And yet withal so meek, so gentle, so merciful, and that even to a cruelty to himself, that if ever the lion and the lamb dwelt together, if ever courage and meekness united, it was in the breast of this royal person.

And which makes the Rebellion more ugly and intolerable, there was scarce any person of note amongst his enemies, who, even fighting against him, did not wear his colours, (*i. e.*) carry some peculiar mark of his former favours and obligations. Some were his own menial servants, and *eat bread at his table*, before they *lifted up their heel against him*. Some receiv'd from him honours, some offices and employments. I could mention particulars of each kind, did I think their names fit to be heard in a church, or from a pulpit. In short, he so behaved himself towards them, that their rebellion might be *malice* indeed, but it could not be *revenge*.

And these his personal virtues shed a suitable influence upon his government. For the space of seventeen years, the peace, plenty, and honour of the *English*, spread itself even to the envy of all neighbour nations. And when that plenty had pampered them into such an unruliness and rebellion, as soon followed

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lowed it; yet still the justness of his government left them at a loss for an occasion; till at length *ship-money* was pitch'd upon, as fit to be reformed into excise and taxes, and the *burden of the subject* to be took off by plunders and sequestrations.

The King, now, to scatter that cloud, which began to gather, and look black, both upon church and state, made those condescensions to their impudent petitions, that they had scarce any thing to make war for, but what was granted them already; and having thus stript himself of his prerogative, he made it clear to the world, that there was nothing left them to fight for, but only his life. Afterwards, in the prosecution of this unnatural war, what overtures did he make for peace? nay, when he had his sword in his hand, his armies about him, and a cause to justify him before God and man; how did he choose to compound himself into nothing, to *depose* and *unking* himself, by their *hard*, unconscionable, unhuman conditions! But all was nothing; he might as well compliment a mastiff, or court a tyger, as think to win those, who were now harden'd in blood, and thorough-paced in rebellion. The truth is, his conscience uncrowned him, as having a mind too pure and defecate, to admit of those max-

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ims and practices of state, that usually make princes great and successful.

Having thus, with a new, unheard-of sort of loyalty, fought against and conquered him, they commit him to prison; and then the King himself notes, that it has been always observed, that there is but *little distance from the prisons of kings to their graves*. To which I farther subjoin, that where the observation is constant, there must needs be some certain standing cause of the connexion of the things observed. And indeed, it is a direct transition from the prison to the grave, *à carceribus ad metam*, the difference between them being only this; that he who is buried is imprisoned under ground, and he who is imprisoned is buried above it. And I could wish, that as they thus slew and buried his body, so we had not also buried *his funeral*.

But to finish this poor imperfect description, though it is of a person so renowned, that he neither needs the best, nor can be injured by the worst; yet in short, he was a prince whose virtues were as prodigious as his sufferings, a true *Pater Patriæ*, a father of his country, if but for this only, that he was the father of such a *son*.

And yet, this the most innocent of men, and the best of Kings, so pious and virtuous,
so

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so learned and judicious, so merciful and obliging, was rebelled against, driven out of his own house, pursued like a *partridge upon the mountains*, and like an exile in his own dominions, inhumanly imprisoned, and at length, for a catastrophe of all, barbarously murdered; though in this his murder was the less of the two, in that his death released him from his prison.

2. Having thus seen *the quality and condition* of the person who suffered; let us in the next place see the engines, and preparations, by which they gradually ascended to the perpetration of this bloody fact. And indeed, it would be but a poor, preposterous discourse, to insist only upon the *consequent*, without taking notice of the *antecedent*.

It were too long to dig to the spring of this rebellion, and to lead you to the secrecies of its first contrivance. But as *David's* phrase is upon another occasion, it *was framed and fashioned in the lowest parts of the earth, and there it was fearfully and wonderfully made*, a work of darkness and retirement, removed from the eye of all *witnesses*, even that of *conscience* also; for conscience was not admitted to their councils.

But the first design was to procure a *Levite* to consecrate their *idol*; that is to say, a

factionous ministry to christen it the *cause of God*. They still owned their party for *God's true Israel*; and being so, it must needs be their duty to come out of *Egypt*, tho' they provided themselves a *Red Sea* for their passage.

And then for their assistance they repair to the * *Northern Steele*; and bring in an unnatural, mercenary army, which like a shoal of locusts covered the land. Such, as inherited the character of those, whom God brought as scourges upon his people the *Jews*. For still we shall read that God punished his people with an *army from the North*. Jer. i. 3. *Out of the north there cometh up a nation which shall make her land desolate*. Jer. iv. 6. *I will bring evil from the North, and a great destruction*.

Now, to endear and unite these into one interest, they invented a *covenant*, much like those who are said to have made a *covenant with hell, and an agreement with death*. It was the most solemn piece of perjury, the most fatal engine against the church, and bane of monarchy, the greatest snare of souls, and
mystery

* This is no reflection upon the *Scotch* nation, nor intended for such, there having been persons as eminent for their loyalty, piety and virtue, of that country, as of any other. But it reflects upon that *Scotch Faction*, which invaded *England* with an army, in assistance of the rebels, and together with them made a shift to destroy the monarchy and the church in both kingdoms.

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mystery of iniquity, that ever was hammer'd by the wit and wickedness of man. I shall not (as they do) abuse scripture-language, and call it the *blood of the covenant*, but give it its proper title, it was *the covenant of blood*. Such an one as the *brethren Simeon and Levi* made, when they were going about the like design. Their very posture of taking it was an ominous mark of its intent, and their *holding up their hands* was a sign that *they were ready to strike*.

It was such an oglio of treason and tyranny, that * one of their assembly, of their *own prophets*, gives this testimony of it, in his narrative upon it, and his testimony is true ; *that it was such a covenant, whether you respect the subject matter, or occasion of it, or the persons that engaged in it, or lastly, the manner of imposing it, that was never read nor heard of, nor the world ever saw the like*. The truth is, it bears no other likeness to ancient covenants, but that as at the making of them they *slew beasts, and divided them*, so this also was solemnized with *blood, slaughter, and division*.

But that I may not accuse in general, without a particular charge, read it over as it stands before their *synod's works*, I mean *their Catechism*, to which it is prefix'd ; as if,

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without

* Mr. Philip Nye.

without it, their system of divinity were not complete, nor their children like to be well instructed, unless they were school'd to Treason, and catechized to Rebellion. I say, in the covenant, as it stands there, in the third article of it. After they had first promised to defend the privileges of parliament, and the liberties of the kingdoms, at length they promise also a defence of the King; but only thus, *that they will defend his person, in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms.* In which it is evident, that their promise of loyalty to him is not *absolute*, but *conditional*; bound hand and foot with this limitation, *so far as he preserved the true religion and liberties of the kingdoms.*

From which I observe these two things:

1. That those who promise obedience to their King, only so far as he preserves the true religion, and the kingdoms liberties; withal reserving to themselves the *judgment* of what religion is *true*, what false, and when these liberties are invaded, when not; do by this put it within their power, to judge religion false, and liberty invaded, as they think convenient; and then, upon such judgment, to absolve themselves from their allegiance.

2. That those very persons, who thus covenant, had already, from pulpit and press, declared

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declared the religion and way of worship established in the church of *England*, and then maintain'd by the King to be *popish* and *idolatrous*; and withal, that the King had actually invaded their liberties. Now, for men to suspend their obedience upon a certain condition, which condition at the same time they declared not performed, was not to profess obedience, but to remonstrate the reasons of their intended disobedience.

And for a farther demonstration of what has been said, read the speech of that worthy * knight, at his execution upon *Tower-hill* on the 14th of *June* last: Where, in the third page, he says, that what the House of Commons did in their *acting singly*, and *by themselves*, (which was no less than *trying and murdering the King, proscribing his son, and voting down monarchy*; with much more, which he there says, *lay yet in the breast of the house*) was but a more *refined pursuit of the designs of the covenant*. For the testimony of which person in this matter, I have thus much to say; that he who having been sent commissioner from hence into *Scotland*, was the first author and contriver of the covenant there, was surely of all others the most likely to know the true meaning of it; and being ready to die,

was

* *Sir Henry Vane.*

was most likely then, if ever, to speak *sincerely* what he knew.

We see here the *doctrine of the covenant*; see the *use* of this doctrine, as it was charged home with a suitable *application* in a war raised against the King, in the cruel usage and imprisonment, killing, sequestering, undoing all who adhered to him, voting no addresses to himself; all which horrid proceedings, though his Majesty now stupendously forgives, yet the world will not, cannot ever forget; for his *indemnity* is not our *oblivion*.

And therefore for those persons, who now clamour and cry out, that they *are persecuted*, because they are no longer permitted to *persecute*; and who choose rather to quit their *ministry*, than to disown the obligation of the *covenant*; I leave it to all understanding, impartial minds to judge, whether they do not by this openly declare to the world, *that they hold themselves obliged by oath, as they shall be able, to act over again all that has been hitherto acted by virtue of that covenant*; and consequently, that they relinquish their places, not for being Non-conformists to the church, but for being virtually Rebels to the crown. Which makes them just as worthy to be *indulged*, as for a man to indulge a *dropsy* or a *malignant fever*.

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fever, which is exasperated by mitigations, and inflamed by every cooling infusion.

But to draw the premises closer to the purpose; thus I argue: That which was the proper means, that enabled the King's mortal enemies to make a war against him, and upon that war to conquer, and upon that conquest to imprison him; and lastly, upon that imprisonment inevitably put the power into the hands of those, who by that power in the end murdered him; that, according to the genuine consequences of reason, was the natural cause of his murder. This is the proposition that I assert, and I shall not trouble myself to make the assumption.

And indeed, those who wipe their mouths and lick themselves innocent, by *clapping* this act upon the army, make just the same plea, that *Pilate* did for his innocence in the death of Christ; because he left the execution to the soldiers; or that the *soldiers themselves* may make, for clearing themselves of all the *blood* that they have spilt, by charging it upon their *swords*.

I conclude therefore, that this was the gradual process to this horrid fact; this the train laid, to blow up monarchy; this the step by which the King ascended the scaffold.

3. Come we now in the third place to shew, who were the actors in this tragical scene:

When

When through the anger of providence, a thriving army of rebels had worsted justice, cleared the field, subdued all opposition and risings, even to the very *insurrections* of *conscience* itself; so that impunity grew at length into the reputation of piety, and success gave rebellion the varnish of religion; that they might consummate their villany, the gown was called in to compleat the execution of the sword; and to make *Westminster-Hall* a place for taking *away lives*, as well as *estates*, a new court was set up, and judges pack'd, who had nothing to do with *justice*, but so far as they were fit to be the *objects* of it. In which, they first of all begin with a confutation of the civilians notion of justice and jurisdiction, it being with them no longer an *act of the supreme power*, as it was ever before defined to be. Such an inferior crew, such a mechanick rabble were they, having not so much as *any arms* to shew the world, but what they wore and *used in rebellion*; that when I survey the list of the King's judges, and the witnesses against him, I seem to have before me a catalogue of *all trades*, and such as might better have filled the *shops* in *Westminster-Hall*, than sat upon the *benches*. Some of which came to be possessors of the *King's houses*, who before had no certain dwelling but the *King's highway*.

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way. And some might have continued tradesmen still, had not want, and inability to trade, sent them to a quicker and surer way of traffick, the wars.

Now, that a King, that such a King, should be murdered by such, the basest of his subjects; and not like a *Nimrod* (as some sanctified railing preachers have called him) but like an *Actæon*, be torn by a pack of blood-hounds; that the steam of a dunghil should thus obscure the sun; this so much enhaunces the calamity of this royal person, and makes his death as different from his, who is conquered and slain by another King, as it is between being torn by a *lion*, and being eaten up with *vermin*. An expression too proper, (I am sure) as coarse as it is; for where we are speaking of *beggars*, nothing can be more natural than to think of *vermin* too.

For, that the feet should *trample upon*, nay kick off the head, who wou'd not look upon it as a monster? But indeed of all others, these were the fittest instruments for such a work: for base descent, and poor education, disposes the mind to imperiousness and cruelty; as the most savage beasts are bred in *dens*, and have their extraction from *under ground*. These therefore were the worthy judges and condemners of a great King, even the refuse of the people, and the very scum of the nation; that
is,

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is, at that time both the *uppermost*, and the *basest* part of it.

4. Pass we now, in the *fourth* place; to the circumstances and manner of procedure, in the management of this ugly fact. And circumstances, we know, have the greatest cast in determining the nature of all actions, (as we commonly judge of any man's port and quality, by the nature of his attendants.)

First of all then; it was not done, like other works of darkness, in secret, nor (as they used to preach) in a corner, but publicly, coloured with the face of justice, managed with openness and solemnity, as *solemn* as the *league* and *covenant* itself. History indeed affords us many examples of princes, who have been clandestinely murdered; which though it be villanous, yet is in itself more excusable; for he who does such a thing in secret, by the very manner of his doing it, confesses himself ashamed of the thing he does: But he who acts it in the face of the sun, vouches his action for laudable, glorious and heroick.

Having thus brought him to their high court of justice; so called, I conceive, *because justice was there arraigned and condemn'd*; or perhaps, therefore called a court of *justice*, because it *never shew'd any mercy*, whether the cause needed it or no: There, by a way of

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tryal as unheard of as their court, they permit him not so much as to speak in his own defence, but with the *innocence and silence of a lamb condemn him to the slaughter.* And it had been well for them, if they cou'd as easily have imposed *silence* upon his *blood* as upon himself.

Being condemned, *they spit in his face,* and deliver him to the mockery and affronts of foldiers. So that I wonder where the blasphemy lies, which some charge upon those, *who make the King's sufferings something to resemble our Saviour's.* But, is it blasphemy to compare the *King to Christ* in that respect, in which Christ himself was made like him? Or can he be *like us* in all things, and *we not like him*? Certainly there was something in that providence, which so long ago *appointed the chapter of our Saviour's passion, to be read on the day of the King's.* And, I am sure, the resemblance is so near, that had he lived before him, he might have been a *type of him.* I confess there is some disparity in the case; for they shew themselves worse than *Jews.* But however, since they make this their objection, that we make the King like Christ, I am willing it should be the greatest of their commendation to be accounted as unlike Christ, as they meritoriously are.

Let

Let us now follow him from their mock tribunal, to the place of his *residence till execution*. Nothing remains to a person condemned, and presently to leave the world, but these two things: 1. To take leave of his friends, a thing not denied to the vilest malefactors; which sufficiently appears, in that it has not been *denied to themselves*. Yet no entreaties from him, or his royal consort, could prevail with the murderers, to let her take the last farewell, and commands of a dying husband; he was permitted to make no *farewel*, but to the *world*. Thus was he treated, and stript of all, even from the *prerogative of a prince*, to the *privilege of a malefactor*. 2. The next thing desired by all dying persons, is freedom to *converse with God*, and to prepare themselves to meet him at his great tribunal. But with an *Italian cruelty* to the soul, as well as the body, they debar him of this freedom also; and even *solitude*, his former *punishment*, is now too great an *enjoyment*. But that they might shew themselves no less enemies to *private*, than they had been to *publick prayer*, they disturb his retirements, and with scoffs and contumelies upbraid those devotions, which were then even interceeding for them. And, I question not, but fanatick fury was then at that height, that they wou'd have even *laughed at Christ himself*

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himself in his *devotions*, had he but used his *own* prayer.

With these preludiums is he brought to the last scene of mockery and cruelty, to a stage erected before his own palace; and for the greater affront of majesty, before that part of it, in which he was wont to display his royalty, and to give audience to embassadors, where now he could not obtain audience himself, in his last addresses to his abused subjects. There he receives the fatal blow, there he dies, *conquering* and *pardoning* his enemies; and at length finds that faithfully performed upon the scaffold, which was at first so frequently and solemnly promised him in the parliament, and perhaps in the same sense, that he should be made a *glorious King*.

But even *this death* was the mercy of murderers, considering what kinds of death several proposed, when they sat in consultation about the manner of it. Even no less than *the gibbet, and the halter*, no less than *to execute him in his robes*, and afterwards drive a stake through his head and body, to stand as a monument upon his grave. In short, all those kinds of death were proposed, which either their malice cou'd suggest, or their own guilt deserve.

And could these men now find in their hearts, or have the face, *to desire to live?* and to plead a *pardon* from the *Son*, who had thus murdered the *Father*? I speak not only of those wretches, who openly imbrued their hands in the bloody sentence, but of those more considerable traytors, who had the villany to manage the contrivance, and yet the cunning to disappear in the execution, *and perhaps the good luck to be preferred after it*, and (for aught I know) *for it* too. And as for those, who now survive, *by a mercy as incredible as their crime*, which has left them to the soft expiations of solitude and repentance (with plenty too attending both;) tho' usually all the professions such make of repentance, are nothing else but the faint resentments of a *guilty horror, the convulsions, and last breathings of a gasping conscience*; and, as the mercy by which they live, is made a visible defiance to government, and a standing encouragement to these daily alarms of plots and conspiracies; so I beseech God, that even their supposed repentance be not such, that both themselves and the kingdom may hereafter have bitter cause too late to repent of it. But if they should indeed prove such as have no conscience, but horror; who by the same crimes will be
made

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made irreconcilable, for which they deserved to be *impardonable* ; who would resume those repentings upon *opportunity*, which they made on *extremity*, and being saved from *the gallows*, make the *usual requital*, which is made for that kind of *deliverance* : I say, if such persons shou'd be only for a time chain'd and tied up, like so many *lions* or *wolves* in *the Tower*, that they may gather more fierceness, to run out at length upon majesty, religion, laws, churches, and the universities ; whether God intends by this a repetition of our former confusions, or a general massacre of our persons, (which is the most likely ;) the Lord in mercy fit and enable us to endure the smart of a misimproved providence, and the infatuate frustration of such a miraculous deliverance.

But to return to this sacred martyr. We have seen him murdered. And is there now any other scene of cruelty to act ? Is not death the end of *the murderers malice*, as well as of the life of him *who is murdered* ? No ; there is another and a viler instance of their fordid implacable cruelty.

In the very embalming his body, and taking out those bowels, (which had they not relented to his enemies, had not been so handled) they gave order to those, to whom

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that work was committed, diligently to search and see (I speak it with horror and indignation) whether his body were not * infected *with some loathsome disease*. I suppose they meant that, which some of his judges were so much troubled with, and stuck so close to them.

Now every one must easily see, that for them to *intimate the enquiry*, was in effect to *enjoin the report*. And here, let any one judge, whether the remorseless malice of im-bitter'd rebels ever rose to such a height of tyranny, that the very embalming of his body must needs be a means to corrupt his name; as if his murder was not complete, unless, together with his life, they did also assassinate his fame, and butcher his reputation.

But the body of that Prince, innocent and virtuous to a miracle, had none of the ruins, and *genteel rottenness*, of our modern debauchery. It was firm, and clear like his conscience; he fell like a cedar, no less *fragrant*, than tall and stately. Rottenness of heart, and *rottenness of bones*, are the badges of some of his † murderers, the noisomeness of whose carcases, caused by the noisomeness of their lives, might even retaliate and re-venge

* Gregory Clement knew what the disease was.

† Clement, Peters, &c.

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venge their sufferings, and while they are under *execution*, poison the *executioner*.

But the last grand, comprehensive circumstances of this fact, which is, as it were, the very form and spirit, which did actuate and run through all the rest, is, that it was done with the pretences of conscience, and the protestations of religion; with eyes lift up to heaven, and exhortations with God, pleas of providence, and inward instigations; till at length with much labour, and many *groans*, they were deliver'd of their conceived mischief.

And certainly, we have cause to deplore this murder with fasting, if it were but for this reason, that it was contrived and committed with *fasting*. Every fast portended some villany, as still a *famine* ushers in a *plague*. But as hunger serves only for appetite, so they never ordained an *humiliation*, but for the doing of something, which being done, might *dine* them at a *thanksgiving*. And such a fury did absurd piety inspire into this *Church-militant* upon these exercises, that we might as well meet an *hungry bear*, as a *preaching colonel* after a fast; whose murdering humiliations strangely verify'd that apposite prophecy in *Isaiah viii. 21*:
When they shall be hungry, they shall curse their

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their King and their God, and look upwards; that is, they should rebel, and blaspheme devoutly. Though, by the way, he who is always looking upwards, can little regard how he walks below.

But was there any thing in the whole book of God to warrant this Rebellion? Any thing, which, instead of obedience, taught them to *sacrifice him*, whom they were to obey? Why yes: *Daniel dreamed a dream*, and there is also something in the *Revelation*, concerning a *beast*, a *little horn*, and the *fifth vial*; and therefore the King undoubtedly ought to *die*. But if neither you nor I can gather so much, or any thing like it, from these places, they will tell us, it is, because we are not inwardly enlightened.

But others more knowing, though not less wicked, insist not so much upon the warrant of scripture, but plead *providential dispensations*: And then God's *works* (it seems) must be regarded before his *words*. And the * *Latin Advocate*, who like a *blind adder*, has spit so much poison upon the King's *person* and *cause*, speaks to the matter roundly †. *Deum sicuti ducem, & impressa passim divina vestigia venerantes, viam haud obscuram, sed illustrem,*

* Mr. Milton.

† In *Præfat. ad defensionem pro populo Anglicano*, (as his *Latin* is.)

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illustrem, & illius auspiciis commonstratam, & patefactum ingressi sumus. But must we read God's mind in his *footsteps*, or in his *word*? This is, as if when we have a *man's band-writing*, we should endeavour to take his *meaning by the measure of his foot*.

But still, conscience, conscience is pleaded as a covering for all enormities, an answer to all questions and accusations. Ask, what made them fight against, imprison, and murder their lawful Sovereign? Why *Conscience*. What made them extirpate the government, and pocket the revenue of the church? *Conscience*. What made them perjure themselves with contrary oaths? What makes *swearing* a sin, and yet *forswearing* to be none? What made them lay hold on God's *promises*, and break their own? *Conscience*. What made them sequester, persecute, and undo their brethren, rape their estates, ruin their families, get into their places; and then say, they only *robbed the Egyptians*? Why, still this large capacious thing THEIR CONSCIENCE; which is always of a much larger compass than their understanding. In a word, we have lived under such a model of religion, as has counted nothing *impious* but *loyalty*, nothing *absurd* but *restitution*.

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But, O blessed God! to what an height can prosperous, audacious impiety arise! Was it not enough, that men once *crucified Christ*; but that there should be a generation of men who should also *crucify Christianity itself*? Must he, who taught *no defence* but patience, allowed *no armour* but *submission*, and never *warranted* any man to shed any other blood but his own, be now again mocked with *soldiers*, and vouched the patron and author of all those hideous murders and rebellions, which an ordinary impiety would stand amazed at the hearing of? and which in this world he has so plainly *condemned by his word*, and will hereafter as severely sentence *in his own person*? Certainly, these monsters are not only the *spots of Christianity*, but so many standing *exceptions from humanity and nature*: and since most of them are Anabaptists, it is pity that in repeating their baptism, they did not baptize themselves *into another religion*.

5. For the fifth and last place, let us view the horridness of the fact in the fatal consequences which did attend it. Every great villainy is like a great *absurdity*, drawing after it a numerous train of *homogeneous consequences*; and none ever spread itself into more than
this.

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this. But I shall endeavour to reduce them all to these two sorts.

1. Such as were *of a civil*,
2. Such as were *of a religious* concern.

1. And first for the civil, political consequences of it.

There immediately followed a change of government, of a government, whose praise had been proclaimed for many centuries, and enrolled in the large fair characters of the *subjects enjoyment and experience*. It was now shred into a Democracy; and the stream of government being cut into many channels, ran thin and shallow: whereupon the subject having *many masters*, every servant had so many distinct *servitudes*.

But the *wheel* of providence, which only they look'd upon, and that *even to a giddiness*, did not stop here: but by a fatal, ridiculous vicissitude, both the power and wickedness of those many, was again revolved, and compacted *into one*: from that * one again it returned *to many*, with several attending variations, till at length we pitch'd upon † *one again*; one beyond whom they could not go, the *ne plus ultra* of all regal excellency, as all *change* tends to, and at last ceases upon its acquired *perfection*.

Nor

* *Cromwell.*

† King CHARLES II.

Nor was the government only, but also the glory of the *English* nation changed ; distinction of orders confounded, the gentry outbraved, and the nobility, who voted the bishops out of their dignities in parliament, by the just judgment of God, thrust out themselves, and brought under the scorn and imperious lash of a *beggar on horseback* ; * *learning discountenanced, and the universities threatened, their revenues to be sold, their colleges to be demolished; the law to be reformed after the same model ; the records of the nation to be burnt.* Such an inundation and deluge of ruin, *reformation*, and confusion, had spread itself upon the whole land, that it seemed a kind of resemblance of *Noah's deluge*, in which only *a few men* survived amongst *many beasts*.

2. The other sort of consequences were of a religious concernment. I speak not of the contempt, rebuke, and discouragement lying upon the divines, or rather the † *preachers* of those days ; for they brought these miseries upon themselves, and had more cause a great deal to curse their own *seditious sermons*, than to curse *Meroz*. They sounded the first trumpet to rebellion, and like true saints had the grace to *persevere* in what they *first began* ;
courting

* All this was Sir *Henry Vane's* villanous and monstrous advice.

† *Presbyterians and Independents.*

Serm. 2. *no Excuse for Rebellion.* 91

courting and recognizing an usurper, calling themselves his *† loyal and obedient subjects*; never enduring so much as to think of their lawful sovereign, till at length the *danger of tythes*, their *unum necessarium*, scared them back to their allegiance.

I speak not therefore of these. But the great destructive consequence of this fact was, that it has left a lasting slur upon the Protestant religion. *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon*, lest the daughters of the *Philistines triumph*, lest the papacy laugh us to scorn; as, if they had no other sort of Protestants to deal with, I am sure they well might.

I confess, the seditious writings of some, who called themselves Protestants, have sufficiently bespattered their religion. See *Calvin* warranting *the three Estates to oppose their Prince*, 4 Instit. ch. 20. Sect. 31. See *Master Knox's Appeal*, and in that his arguments for resisting *the civil magistrate*. Read *Mr. Buchanan's discourse de jure regni apud Scotos*. Read the *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*, under the name of *Junius Brutus*, writ by *Ottoman the Civilian*. See *Pareus* upon the thirteenth chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*, where he states *atrocem aliquam injuriam*, a large term,

* *Baxter* in his book dedicated to *Richard Cromwell* did so.

92 *Pretence of Conscience,*

term, and of very easy application, to be a sufficient reason for subjects to take up arms against their King. A book, instead of the author, most deservedly burnt by the hangman. But shall we call this a comment upon the thirteenth chapter of the epistle to the *Romans*? It is rather a comment upon the covenant. Both of which, as they teach the same doctrine, so they deserved, and justly had the *same* * *confutation*.

But these principles, like sleeping lions, lay still a great while, and were never compleatly actuate, nor appear'd in the field, till the *French* holy league, and the *English* rebellion.

Let the *Powder-plot* be as bad as it will or can, yet still there is as much difference between the *King's murder*, and that, as there is between an *action*, and an *attempt*. What the papal bulls and anathema's could not do, factious sermons have brought about. What was then contrived *against the parliament-house*, has been since *done by it*. What the *papists powder* intended, the soldiers *match* has effected. I say, let the Powder-treason be look'd upon (as indeed it is) as the product of hell, as black as the souls and principles that hatch'd it; yet still this reformation-murder will preponderate; and *January* (in villany)

* Burnt by the common hangman in *Oxen*, by command of King *James* the First.

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villany) always have the precedency of *November*.

And thus, I have traced this accursed fact, through all the parts and ingredients of it. And now, if we reflect upon the quality of the person, upon whom it was done, the condition of the persons who did it, the means, circumstances, and manner of its transaction; I suppose it will fill the measure, and reach the height of the words of the text: *That there was no such deed done, nor seen, since the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt, to this day.*

For my own part, my apprehension of it over-bears my expressions; and how to set it off, I know not; for *black receives no other colour*. But, when I call together all the ideas of horror, rake all the records of the *Roman*, *Græcian*, and *Barbarian* wonders, together with new-fancied instances, and unheard-of possibilities, yet I find no parallel; and therefore have this only to say of the King's murder, that it is a thing, than which nothing can be imagined more * *strange, amazing, and astonishing, except its pardon.*

And

* This was far from being intended as a reflection upon the Act of Indemnity itself, and much less upon the royal author of it, but only as a rhetorical attempt, for expressing the transcendent height of one thing, by an equally transcendent height of another; viz. by that of the *mercy pardoning*, and by that of the *crime pardoned*; both of them in their several kinds superlative.

And now, having done with the first part of the text, does it not naturally engage me in the duty of the second? Must such a deed, as was neither seen, nor heard of, be also neither spoken of? or must it be stroked with smooth, mollifying expressions? Is this the way to cure the *wound*, by pouring *oil upon* those that made it? And must *Absalom* be therefore dealt with *gently*, because he was an unnatural and a sturdy rebel?

If, as the text bids, *we consider* of the fact, and *take advice*, (that is, advise with reason and conscience) we cannot but obey it in the following words, and *speake our minds*. For could *Cræsus's* dumb son speak at the very attempt of a murder upon his prince and father? and shall a preacher be dumb, when such a murder is actually committed?

Or do we think it is enough to make long doleful harangues against murder, and cruelty, and concerning the prerogative of Kings, without ripping up the particular, mysterious, diabolical arts of its first contrivance. Can things peculiar, and unheard-of, be treated with the *toothless generalities* of a commonplace?

I will not be so uncharitable, as to charge a *consent* in this particular, wheresoever I find a *silence*: I will only conclude such to be wiser than

Serm. 2. *no Excuse for Rebellion.* 95

than others, and to wait for another turn ; and from their *behaviour* rationally collect *their expectation*. But whosoever is so sage, so prudential, or (to speak more significantly) *so much a politician*, as to fit himself for every change ; he will find, that if ever another turn befalls the nation, it will be the wrong-side outwards, the lowest uppermost. And therefore, for these silent candidates of future preferment, I wish them no other punishment for the *treason of their desire*, than to be *preferred under another change*.

But I have not yet finished my text, nor, according to the command of it, *spoke all my mind*. I have one thing more to propose, and with that to conclude.

Wou'd you be willing to see this scene acted over again ? to see that restless, plotting humour, which now boils and ferments in many traitorous breasts, once more display itself, in the dismal effects of war and desolation ? Wou'd you see the rascality of the nation, in troops and tumults beleaguer the royal palace ? Wou'd you hear ministers absolving their congregations from their sacred oaths of allegiance, and sending them into the field to lose their lives, and their souls, in a professed rebellion against their Sovereign ? Wou'd you see an insolent over-turning army, in the heart and bowels

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of the kingdom, moving to and fro, to the terror of every thing, which is noble, generous, or religious? Wou'd you see the loyal gentry harassed, starved, and undone by the oppression of base, insulting, grinding *committees*? Wou'd you see the clergy torn in pieces, and sacrificed by the inquisition of *synods, tryers,* and commissioners?

And to mention the greatest last; wou'd you have the King, with his *father's kingdoms*, inherit also his *fortune*? Wou'd you see the crown trampled upon, majesty haled from *prison to prison*; and at length with the vilest circumstances of spite and cruelty, bleeding and dying at the feet of bloody, unhuman miscreants? Wou'd you, now providence has cast out the destructive interest from the parliament, and the *house* is pretty well *swept and cleansed*, have the old *unclean spirit* return, and take to *itself seven spirits*, seven other interests worse than itself, and dwell there, so make our *latter end worse than our beginning*?

We hear of plots and combinations, parties joining and agreeing; and let us not trust too much in their opposition amongst themselves. The elements can fight, and yet unite into one body. *Ephraim* against *Manasseh*, and *Manasseh* against *Ephraim*; but both equally against the royal tribe of *Judah*.

Now

Serm. 2. *no Excuse for Rebellion.* 97

Now if we dread these furies again being let loose upon us, oh! let us fear the return of our former provocations. If we wou'd keep off the axe from our princes and nobles, let us lay it to our sins. If we wou'd preserve their lives, let us amend our own. We have complain'd of armies, committees, sequestrators, tryers, and decimators. But our sins, our sins, are those that have sucked the blood of this nation; these have purpled the scaffold with the royal gore, these have plowed up so many noble families, made so many widows, and snatch'd the bread out of the mouths of so many poor orphans. It is our *not fearing God*, that has made others not to *honour the King*; our not benefiting by the ordinances of the church, that has enrich'd others with her spoils.

And now, since I have slid into a mention of the church of *England*, which at this time is so much struck and railed at, and in danger (like its first head) to be crucified between *two thieves*: I shall say thus much of it; that it is the only church in Christendom we read of, whose avowed principles and practices disown all resistance of the civil power; and which the saddest experience, and the truest policy and reason will evince to be the only one, that is durably consistent

with the *English* monarchy. Let men look both into its doctrine, and into its history, and they will find neither the *Calvins*, the *Knoxes*, the *Junius Brutus's*, the *Synods*, nor the holy Commonwealths of the one side ; nor yet the *Bellarmines*, the *Escobars*, nor the *Mariana's* of the other. It has no fault, but its revenues ; and those too but the remainders of a potent, forfeited sacrilege. And therefore, if God, in his anger to this kingdom, should suffer it to be run down, either by the impious nonsense and idolatry of one party, or the sordid tyranny and fanaticism of the other ; yet we will acquiesce in this, that if ever our church falls, it falls neither tainted with the infamy of *popish plots*, nor of *reforming rebellions* ; and that it was neither her pretended corruption, or superstition, but her own lands, and the kingdom's sins, that destroyed her.

For when I hear of conspiracies, seditious designs, covenants and plots, they do not much move or affright me. But when I see the same covetousness, the same drunkenness and prophaneness, that was first punished in ourselves, and then in our sanctify'd enemies ; when I see joy turned into a revel, and debauchery *proclaim* itself louder than it can be *proclaimed against* ; these, I must confess, stagger and astonish me ; and I can

Serm. 2. *no Excuse for Rebellion.* 99

not persuade myself, that we were delivered, to do all these abominations.

But if we have not the grace of christians, have we not the hearts of men? Have we no bowels, no relentings? If the blood and banishment of our Kings cannot move us, if the miseries of our common mother the church, ready to fall back into the jaws of purchasers, and reformers, cannot work upon us; yet shall we not at least pity our posterity? Shall we commit sins, and breed up children to inherit the curse? Shall the infants now unborn have cause to say hereafter, in the bitterness of their souls, *Our fathers have eaten the sour grapes of disobedience, and our teeth are set on edge by rebellions and confusions.*

How does any man know, but the very oath he is swearing, the lewdness he is committing, may be scored up by God as one *item* for a new rebellion? We may be rebels, and yet neither vote in parliaments, sit in committees, or fight in armies. Every sin is virtually a treason; and we may be guilty of murder, by breaking other commands besides the sixth.

But at present *we are made whole*: God has by a miracle healed the breaches, cured the maladies, and bound up the wounds of a bleeding nation: What remains now, but that

100 *Pretence of Conscience, &c.*

we take the counsel, that seconded a like miraculous cure : *Go, sin no more, lest a worse evil come unto thee?* But since our evil has been so superlative, as not to acknowledge a worse ; since our calamities having reached the highest, give us rather cause to fear a repetition, than any possibility of gradation ; I shall dismiss you with the like, though something altered advice, *Go, sin no more, lest the same evil befall you.*

Which God of his infinite mercy prevent, even that God, by whom Kings reign, and Princes decree justice ; by whom their thrones are established, and by whom their blood will assuredly be revenged. To whom therefore be rendered and ascribed, as is most due, all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both now, and for evermore. Amen.

Satan

*Satan himself transformed into an
Angel of Light.*

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

U N I V E R S I T Y

At St. MARY'S-Church in OXFORD,
on an Aët-Sunday.

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SERMON III.

Satan himself transformed into
an Angel of Light.

2 CORINTH. XI. 14.

*And no marvel; for Satan himself is
transformed into an Angel of Light.*

HE who has arrived to that pitch of infidelity, as to deny that *there is a devil*, gives a shrewd proof, that he is deluded by him; and so by this very denial does unawares infer the thing, which he would deny. There have indeed been some in all ages, sects, and religions, who have promoted the devil's *interests*, by arguing against his *being*. For that, which men generally most desire, is to go on in their sin without controul; and it cannot be more their desire, than the devil accounts it his *interest*, that they should do so. But when they

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are told withal, that he who tempts to sin now, is to execute God's wrath for our sin hereafter; the belief of a spirit, appointed to so terrible an office, standing so directly between them and their sins, they can never proceed smoothly in them, till such a belief be first taken out of the way; and therefore, no wonder if men argue against the thing they *bate*; and for the freer enjoyment of their lusts, do all they can to baffle and throw off a persuasion, which does but *torment them before their time*: This undoubtedly being the true, if not only ground of all the disputes men raise against *dæmons*, or *evil spirits*; that their guilt has made it *their concern*, that there should be *none*.

Nevertheless, on the other side, it must be considered, that the proving of *spirits*, and *immaterial substances*, from the common discourses of the world upon this subject, has not hitherto proved so successful, as might be wished. For that there are such finite, incorporeal beings, as we call *spirits*, I take to be a point of that moment, that the belief of it ought to be established upon much surer proofs, than such as are commonly taken from *visions*, and *apparitions*, and the *reports* which use to go of them; it having never hitherto been held for solid reasoning, to argue from what

what *seems*, to what *exists*; or, in other words, from *appearances* to *things*; especially since it has been found so frequent, for the working of a *strong fancy*, and a *weak judgment*, to pass with many for *apparitions*. Nor yet can I think the same sufficiently proved, from several strange effects, chances, and alterations, which (as historians tell us) having sometimes happened in the world, and carrying in them the marks of a rational efficiency, (but manifestly above all human power) have therefore by some been ascribed to *spirits*, as the proper and immediate causes thereof. For such a conclusion, I conceive, cannot be certainly drawn from thence, unless we were able to comprehend the full force and activity of all corporeal substances, especially the celestial; so as to assign the utmost term, which their activity can reach to, and beyond which it cannot go; which, I suppose, no sober reasoner, or true philosopher will pretend to.

And therefore in the present case, allowing the forementioned common arguments all the advantage of probability they can justly lay claim to; yet if we would have a certain proof of the existence of finite *spirits*, good or bad, we ought, no doubt, to fetch it from that infallible word of *revelation*, held forth to

us in the scriptures ; and so employ *faith* to piece up the shortness and defects of *science* ; which, as nothing but faith can do, so that man must by no means pretend to *faith*, who will not sell his assent under a demonstration ; nor indeed to so much as prudence, who will be convinced by nothing but *experience*, when perhaps *the experiment* may prove his destruction. He who believes *that there is a devil*, puts himself into the ready way to escape him. But as for those modern Sadducees, who will believe neither *Angel* nor *Spirit*, because they cannot see them ; and with whom *invisible* and *incredible* pass for terms perfectly equipollent ; they would do wisely to consider, that as the fowler would certainly spoil his own game, should he not, as much as possible, keep out of sight ; so the devil never plants his snares so skilfully and successfully, as when he conceals his person ; nor tempts so dangerously, as when he can persuade men that there is no tempter.

But I fear I have argued too far upon this point already ; since it may seem something inartificial for the Sermon to *prove*, what the text had *supposed*. But since the infidelity of the present age has made the proof of that necessary, which former ages took for granted ; I hope the usefulness of the subject

ject will atone for what may seem less regular in the *prosecution*. It must therefore be allowed (and that not only from the foregoing *probable* arguments, but much more from an infallible and divine testimony) *that there is a devil, a satan, and a tempter*. And we have him here presented to us, under such a strange kind of mask or vizard, that we cannot see him for *light*; and then surely he must needs walk undiscovered, who can make that, which discovers all things else, *his disguise*. But the wonder ought to abate, if we consider, that there is a light, which dazzles and deludes, as well as one which informs and directs; and that it is the former of these, which *Satan clothes himself with, as with a garment*. A light so far resembling that of *the stars*, that it still *rules by night*, and has always darkness both for its occasion and companion. The badge of truth is *unity*, and the property of falshood *variety*; and accordingly the devil appears all things, as he has occasion; the *priest*, the *casuist*, the *reformer*, the *reconciler*; and in a word, any thing but himself. He can change his voice, his dress, and the whole scene of his fallacies; and by a dextrous management of the fraud, present you with an *Esau* under the form of a *Jacob*: for the old serpent can shift his skin, as often as he has a
turn

turn to serve by his doing so. For it is a short and easy transition from *darkness* to *light*; even as near as the confines of *night* and *day*. So that this active spirit can quickly pass from one to the other, and equally carry on a *work of darkness* in both. We read of a *Dæmonium Meridianum*, though the Sun, we know, is then highest, and the light greatest. The Psalmist in *Psal. xci. 6.* tells us not only of a *pestilence which walks in darkness*, but also of a *destruction which wasteth at noon-day*; and consequently that he who is the great manager both of the one and the other, is as much a *devil*, when he shines as *Lucifer*, as when he destroys as *Satan*.

Now the devil, I conceive, is represented to us thus transformed in the text; not so much in respect of what he is in his *person*, as in *his practice* upon men; for none ever dissembles or conceals himself, but he has a design upon another: and therefore to prosecute the sense of the words, by as full a representation of his frauds, as I am able to give, I shall discourse of him in this method.

1. I shall endeavour to shew the way of his operation upon the soul, in conveying his fallacies into the minds of men.

2. I shall shew the grand instances in which he has played an angel of light, in the several ages of the church successively. And, 3

3. And lastly, give caution against some principles, by which he is like to repeat the same cheat upon the world, if not prevented in time to come.

And first, for the influence he has upon the soul.

To lay open here all the ways, whereby this spiritual engineer works upon us, to trace the *serpent* in all his windings and turnings, is a thing, I believe, as much above a mere human understanding, as that is below an angelical; but so far as the ducture of *common reason, scripture, and experience* will direct our enquiries, we shall find that there are three ways, by which he powerfully reaches, and operates upon the minds of men. As,

1. By moving, stirring, and sometimes altering the humours and disposition of the body. That the soul in all its operations is strangely affected by, and held down to the particular *crasis* and constitution of the corporeal part, is indubitable: And that the devil can model, and frame the temperament of it to his own purpose, the woman whom *Satan is said to have bound for so many years*, Luke xiii. 16. is a convincing instance. Now this expert anatomist, who has examined and looked into all the secret recesses, caverns, and little fibres both of body and soul (as I
may

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may so express the matter) knows that there is no *grace*, but has its *counterfeit* in some *passion*; and no passion of the mind, but moves upon the wheel of some *humour* of the body. So that it is easy for him to refine, and (as it were) sanctify the fire and fury of a cholerick humour *into* zeal, and raise the operations of melancholy to the semblance of a mortify'd demureness and *humiliation*. On which case of *supposed* sorrow for sin, but *real* disturbance from some other cause, it is not to be questioned, but many repair to the *divine*, whose best *casuist* were an *apothecary*; and endeavour to cure and carry off their *despair*, with a *promise*, or perhaps a *prophecy*, which might be better done with a *purge*. Poor self-deluding souls! often misapplying the blood of Christ under these circumstances, in which a little *effusion of their own* would more effectually work the cure; and *Luke as a physician*, gives them a much speedier relief, than *Luke as an evangelist*.

2. The devil can act upon the soul, by suggesting the ideas, and spiritual pictures of things (as they may be not unfitly called) to the *imagination*. For this is the grand repository of all the ideas and representations, which the mind of man can work either *upon*, or *by*. So that Satan, our skilful artist, can as easily slide his

Serm. 3. *an Angel of Light.* III

his injections into the fancy, as present a deluding image to the eye. From whence it is, that poor deluded women (followers of conventicles, or rather of such as meet them there) talk much of sudden *joys* and *raptures*, and secret *whispers of the spirit*, with a great deal more of such cant; in all which this grand impostor is still at his old work, and whether he speaks in the gentle charming voice of a comforter, or roars in the terrible thunders of damnation, is, and ever was, *a lyar from the beginning, and will be so to the end.* Again, some perhaps have had a text, of something a peculiar significancy, cast into their fancy; as that for instance in *Jerem. xlviii. 20. Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from shedding blood*; whereupon they presently thought themselves commissioned, by an extraordinary call from heaven, to cut and slay all such, as fought for the *crown and the church*, in the late infamous * rebellion. Likewise it is very credible, that the same spirit can in discourse suggest smart sentences and strictures of wit, far surpassing the invention of the speaker; for otherwise, whence can it be that persons, known to be deplorably dull in other things, can yet be witty upon a subject *obscene*, or *prophane*? And
no

* Such persons, principles, and practices, can want nothing, to enable them to *overthrow* any government, but to be *countenanced* by it.

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no doubt, what the papists falsely and ridiculously said of *Luther*, may with great truth be said of many leading hereticks, that the *devil furnish'd them with arguments*. For where the cause is his, he will never be wanting to give it an helping hand; but will be still with the heretick in his study, guiding his pen, and assisting his invention with many a lucky turn of thought, and sophistical reasoning: So that upon the whole matter, the devil himself may, perhaps, more properly pass for the heretick; and *Arius*, or *Socinus*, only for the *Amanuensis*. For he is able to present *images* of words and sentences to the imagination, in as clear and perspicuous an order, as the most faithful and methodical memory. And why should the common word be, that the *devil stands at the lyar's elbow*, if he were not to be his *prompter*? But,

3. The devil can work upon the soul, by an actual *ingress into*, and *personal possession* of the man, so as to move and act him; and like a kind of vicarious soul, use his body, and the several faculties and members thereof, as instruments of the several operations, which he exerts by them. Upon which account persons so possessed were heretofore called πνευματοφόροι, and ἐνεργούμενοι. And if any one here should doubt, that a *spirit* can move and impel a body,

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dy, since without quantity and dimensions on both sides there can be no *contact*; and since without *contact* some think all impulsions impossible; this maxim, if too far insisted upon, would bear as hard upon the soul itself, as to its moving the body, (allowing it to be a spiritual immaterial substance; which, I hope, in a christian auditory, needs not to be proved) And now, the premises thus supposed, how easy must it be for this spirit, to cast any person possessed by him, into a kind of prophetic extasy; and with other amazing extravagancies, to utter through him certain sentences and opinions; and in the utterance thereof, to intermix some things pious and good, to take off the suspicion, and qualify the poison of the bad? For so the *Sibyls* used to wait, till at a certain time the *dæmons* entred into them, and gave answers by them, suspending the natural actings of their souls, and using their bodily organs of speech, with strange prodigious convulsions, and certain circumstances of raving and unseemly horror attending them; as *Virgil* elegantly describes the *Cumæan Sibyl*, in his 6th *Æneid*.

—*Subitò non vultus, non color unus,
Non comptæ mansere comæ, sed pectus an-
belum,*

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*Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,
Nec mortale sonans, &c.*

Of which words, the *Quakers* amongst us (as little as they deal in *Latin*) have yet been the best and fullest interpreters, by being the liveliest instances of the thing described in them, of any that I know. And so likewise in the case of the person possessed, *Acts* xix. 16. certainly he could never have prevailed over so many men, had he not had something in him, stronger than man. But what needs there any farther arguing, or how is it possible for that man to question, whether the devil can enter into, and take possession of men, who shall read how often our Saviour cast him out?

These, I say, are the *physical* ways of operation, which the devil can employ so, as to insinuate thereby his impostures, in a clever unsuspected manner: Which three general ways doubtless may be improved, by so experienced a craftsman, into myriads of particulars. But I shall confine myself to his dealings with the church, and that only within the times of christianity; and so pass to the *second general head* proposed.

2. Which was to shew the *grand instances, in which the devil, under this mask of light, has imposed upon the christian world.* And here

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we must premise this general observation, as the basis of all the ensuing particulars, *viz.* That it has been the devil's constant method, to accommodate his impostures to the most received and prevailing notions, and the peculiar proper improvements of each particular age. And accordingly, let us take a survey of the several periods of them. As,

1. The grand ruling principle of the first ages of the church, then chiefly consisting of the *Gentile converts*, was an extraordinarily zealous devotion, and concern for the honour, and worship of one only God, having been so newly converted from the worship of many. Which great truth, since the devil could neither seasonably, nor successfully oppose then; he saw it his interest to swim with the stream, which he could not stem, and by a dextrous turn of hand, to make use of one truth to supplant another. Accordingly, having met with a fit instrument for his purpose, he sets up in *Arianism*, and with a bold stroke strikes at no lower an article than the Godhead of the Son of God; and so manages this mighty and universal hatred of polytheism, to the rejection of a trinity of *divine coequal persons*, as no ways consistent with the *unity of the divine essence*. The blasphemy of which opinion needed, no doubt, a more than ordinary artist, to give it

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the best gloss and colour he could, and therefore was not to be induced and ushered into the world, but by very plausible, and seemingly pious pleas.

As for instance; that the ascribing of a deity, or divine nature to Christ, was not so much a *removal* of polytheism, as a *change*. That for Christ to decry the pagan Gods, and yet assume the Godhead to himself, was, instead of being their *reformer*, to be their *rival*; and that by thus transferring divine worship to his own person, he did not so much *destroy* idolatry, as *monopolize* it. Moreover, that Christ himself professes *his Father to be greater than he*; and therefore, that either he himself is not God; or if so, that the *Deity* then includes not the highest degree of perfection. For if Christ was God, and upon that account comprehended in him all perfections, how could the *Father* be greater? which *relation* yet must imply a degree of perfection above that of the *Son*. And if it should be here replied, that the Father is greater in respect of a *personal* excellency, but not of a *natural*; such as reply so, should do well to consider, how it can be; that where *essence* includes *all perfection*, *personality* can add any farther. Besides, that the granting Christ *to be the Son of God*, will not therefore infer him *to be God*.

For

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For the son of a king is but his father's subject; and consequently to assert any more concerning Christ, seems to be only paganism refined, and idolatry in a better dress.

These, I say, were the *Arian* objections against the Deity of our Saviour; all of them extremely sophistical and slight, and such as the heathen philosophers had urged all along against the christian religion, for near three hundred years before *Arius* was born: And we shall find them grounded only upon their not distinguishing between perfection *absolute* and *relative*, and their absurd arguing from *finite* and *created Beings* to a Being *infinite and uncreate*; as might easily be shewn in each of the foregoing particulars, would the time allotted for this exercise permit. So that it was a most true and proper remark; *That if we take from hereticks, disputing against any article of the christian faith, what is common to them with the heathens disputing against the whole body of christianity, they will have little or nothing left them, which is new, or can be called peculiarly their own.* Nevertheless, such plausible stuff, back'd with power, and managed by the devil, drew over most of the christian churches, for a considerable time, to *Arianism*; and so, by a very preposterous way of worship,

I 3

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ship, made them sacrifice the *Son* to the honour of the *Father*. But,

2. As the *Arian* ages had chiefly set themselves to run down, or rather quite take away our *Saviour's* divinity; so the following ages, by an ἀμετρία τῆς ἀνδολῆς, a kind of contrary stretch, were no less intent upon paying a boundless and exorbitant devotion to every thing belonging to his humanity; and in a very particular, and more than ordinary manner, to those who had eminently done and suffered (especially to the degree of martyrdom) for his person and religion. And this was the course all along taken by the *papal heresy*, from the very first that it got footing in the church; touching which, let none think it strange, that I make an immediate step from the times of *Arianism* to those of *Popery*, (as if there ought to be a greater interval put between them.) For tho' it must be confessed, that *Arianism* received its mortal wound by the first council of *Nice*, pretty early in the fourth century; yet these following heresies of *Macedonianism*, *Nestorianism*, *Eutychianism*, *Monothelitism*, &c. (which, as different as they were amongst themselves, were yet, in truth, but so many shoots out of the old *Arian* stock) continued much longer, and reached considerably beyond the sixth century; about the end where-
of,

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of, and the beginning of the seventh, *Popery* began to work and shew itself by degrees; (*Gregory the Great*, who lived till the year of our Lord 604, being, not without cause, reckoned the *last* of the *good* popes of *Rome*, and the *first* of the *bad* :) so that in truth there was no vacancy, or intermediate chasm of time, between the *Arian* poison *ceasing*, and the *Popish* ferment *beginning* to infest the church. Well then, the Deity of Christ having been thus irrefragably proved, and *Arianism*, with its appendent heresies, at length drawing off the stage, and another predominant principle coming on; it was now time for the grand deceiver to change his hand, being to work upon quite different *materials*, as well as with quite different *instruments*; and so to turn that vast honour and zeal, which (as we observed) the world bore to Christ's *human nature*, to the perverting, depraving, and undermining of Christianity itself. For from hence men came to give that inordinate veneration to the sacrament of Christ's body and blood; and for the defence thereof invented that monster of absurdities, *Transubstantiation*. After which, with great industry, they got together and kept all *reliques*, which any way represented his memory, as pieces of the *cross*, and *pictures* of his *body*, till at length they even

adored them; and, to justify their so doing, they cast their *practice* into a *doctrine*, that the *crucifix* was to be adored with relative divine worship: more than which (by the way) the heathens themselves never gave to their idols; but worshipped them only so far as they were *representations*, or rather significations of those effects and benefits, for which they adored the deity, the great cause and original of them. But this superstition stopped not here, but extended itself likewise to Christ's friends and followers, the *Saints*; those especially, who (as I noted before) had sealed their profession with their blood: The memory of whom they celebrated with solemn invocations of them at their sepulchres, making offerings to them there, and bowing, and falling prostrate at the very mention of their names; till at length this reverential *respect* grew into downright *adoration*. And thus by degrees Paganism came to be christened into a new form and name, by their setting up their *Divi*, or begodded tutelar *Saints*, and prosecuting their *apotheosis* with divine worship. And lest in this they might seem to entrench upon the honour of Christ, by treating his saints and servants upon equal terms with himself, they made their very zeal for his *honour*, a plea for their making these saints their *intercessors* with him;

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him ; alledging (forsooth) their own unfitness, and utter unworthiness to approach him by a direct address, without such a *mediator* : as subjects do then most acceptably petition their earthly prince, when their suits are handed to him by some particular and beloved favourite. A shrewd argument, no doubt, if God and man proceeded by the same methods. But to go on : since religion would be but a very lame and imperfect institution, should not *points of faith* be seconded with suitable *rules of practice* ; hereupon mortification and austerity of life were (in shew at least) equally advanced, and Satan began to play the *white* devil, by prohibiting, upon pretence of higher sacerdotal purity, the marriage of the clergy, (though at the same time reckoned by themselves a sacrament) forbidding also certain sorts of meat, and enjoining others ; as likewise imposing *hair-shirts, whips, scourges*, with many more such corporal severities ; for the recommending of all which to mens use, they taught them, that these practices were *satisfactory* for sin, and *meritorious* of heaven. And lest this might seem to derogate from *Christ's satisfaction*, (as it certainly did) they distinguish'd sins into *mortal* and *venial*. And whereas they held, that these *venial* sins could not deserve eternal death ; and withal, that
many

many men die before they have completed their repentance; for them they invented a certain place in the other world, for the temporal, penal expiation of such sins; to wit, *Purgatory*. And since the pains of this were not to be *eternal*, but that a deliverance and redemption of the souls held therein might be procured; and that by the *merit of the good works of others*, to help out those who had none of their own; they came from hence to assert works of *supererogation*, (as they called them.) Which good works, and the merit of them, not being always actually employed for the benefit of any, (and as if the world abounded more with good works than bad) they are said to be reserved in the *treasury of the church*, to be disposed of (as there should be occasion) to such as were able and willing, to ransom their suffering friends with silver and gold, (the very best of metals, and always held by them a valuable price for souls) and this produced *indulgencies*; the most useful and profitable part of the whole *Romish* religion.

By all which particulars put together, you may see the curious contexture and concatenation of the several mysteries and intrigues of popery; and how artificially one is linked to, and locked within the other, *in this chain*

of

of darkneſs made to hold and keep poor ſouls to the judgment of the great day; and (if God be not ſo merciful, as to ſave them in ſpite of their religion) to *condemn them* in it too. And now theſe tenets being advantaged by the ſuitableneſs of them to man's natural diſpoſition, (which in matters of belief is too prone to credulity and *ſuperſtition*, and in matters of practice, to an arrogant opinion of *merit*; every man being too apt to think that a good action obliges God, and ſatisſies for an ill one :) Theſe tenets, I ſay, were upon theſe terms eaſily imbibed by the vulgar, in thoſe dark times of ignorance; which ignorance alſo was carefully cheriſhed and kept up, by maintaining the ſufficiency of an *implicit faith*, and ſecuring the Scriptures under the double lock, of an unknown language, and a bad tranſlation. Beſides all which, that they might not in the laſt place want a ſure ſhelter and ſtrong hold to defend them, in caſe this terrible book of the Scriptures ſhould come to be unſealed, and let looſe upon them, they had two other refuges to fly to; to wit, that of *unwritten traditions*, without which they held the Scriptures *imperfect*; and of an *infallible judge*, without which they affirmed them to be *obſcure*: two qualifications which muſt unavoidably render the Scriptures an incompetent rule of faith.

And

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And thus the nail is driven home, and riveted too; and upon their being hereby made judges in their own cause, they do, and must stand incorrigible; forasmuch as all conviction upon these terms is utterly impossible. And thus we have seen what a lofty *Babel* has been raised by this grand architect of mischief and confusion, the *devil*: A *Babel* with the top of it reaching to *heaven*, and the foundation of it laid in *hell*. And we have seen likewise the materials *with which*, and the arts *by which*, this stupendous structure was reared: And since neither *old* nor *new Babel* was built in a day; we have given some account also, how this master-builder has all along suited his tools and engines to the proper genius and condition of each several age; sometimes working *in the light*, and sometimes *in the dark*; sometimes *above ground*, and sometimes *under it*; but in all, like a *Romish* priest, still under a *disguise*.

And here, I think, it may be farther worth our considering, that since the aspects and influences in heaven (which are some of the chief instruments, whereby providence governs this lower world) must needs work considerably upon the tempers, humours, and constitutions of men, under their several positions and revolutions; it cannot but follow,
that

that the same must work very powerfully about the affairs of religion also, so far as the tempers and dispositions of men are apt to mingle and strike in with them. And accordingly, as I have observed that Satan played his *papal game*, chiefly in the times of ignorance, and *sowed his tares while the world was asleep*; *cùm Augustinus haberetur inexpugnabilis dialecticus, quod legisset Categorias Aristotelis. Cùm qui Græcè sciret, suspectus; qui autem Hebraicè, planè magicus putaretur.* When the words *hæreticum devita*, were look'd upon as sufficient to warrant the *taking away the life* of an heretick; so on the other side, when this mist of ignorance began to clear up, and polite learning to recover, and get footing again in the world, by the great abilities and industry of *Erasmus, Melancthon, Politian, Budæus, Calvin*, and several others, men generally then began to smell out the cheat; and after a long growing suspicion of the imposture they had been held under, came at length to a resolution quite to throw it off. But then again, lest so sudden and mighty a stream of light, breaking in upon the prince of darkness, might wholly over-bear and baffle all his projects, he also began wisely to light up *his candle* too, in the new sect and society of *Ignatius Loyola*; a sect composed of the best wits

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wits and ablest heads, the most learned and industrious that could be got, to lift themselves to serve the Pope under him. And by this course he quickly brought his myrmidons, to fight the Protestants at their own weapons, and for parts and literature to vye with the Reformation. For he saw well enough, that it was learning, which must do his business, when ignorance was grown out of *fashion*. And that, when such multitudes were resolved to have *their eyes open*, it was time for him to *look about him* too. Accordingly, Satan, who loves to compass his ends, and amuse the world by contrary methods, (like the evil spirit in the gospel, sometimes casting the person possessed by him into the *fire*, and sometimes into the *water*) having, as we have noted, long imposed upon Christendom by popery; and at length finding a new light sprung in upon a great part of it, and mightily chasing away that darkness before it, he thought it his interest to trump up a new scene of things, and so correspondently to the two main parts of religion, *speculative* and *practical*, he fell upon two contrary, but equally destructive extremes, *Socinianism* and *Enthusiasm*: Thus, like a subtle disputant, casting his argument into such a dilemma, as should be sure to gain him his point, and gall his enemy one way or other. And,

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1. For the *first extreme, Socinianism.* *Fauftus Socinus* seems to have been a person so qualified by providence with a competent stock of parts, and measure of reason, (for the man was no miracle, either in divinity or philosophy) to shew, how wofully such an one (being left to himself) might blunder, and fall short of the right notions of religion, even in the plainest and most important points of it. *He was indeed so bred*, and principled by his uncle *Lelius*, that Satan thought him a fit instrument, for the advancement of the *light of reason*, above that of *revelation*, by making (as he notoriously did) the *former* the sole judge of the *latter*. *Socinus's* main design (or *pretence* at least) was to bring all the mysteries of Christianity to a full accommodation with the general notions of man's reason; and so far the design was, no doubt, fair and laudable enough, had it kept within the bounds of a sober prosecution. For that which is contrary to reason, cannot be true in religion; nor can God contradict that in the book of his *revealed word*, which he had writ before in the *book of nature*: so much, I say, is certain, and cannot be denied. Nevertheless, a little reason will prove also, that many things may seem *contrary to reason*, which yet really *are not so*; and where this seeming contrariety is, the question

question will be; whether *revelation* ought to controul *reason*, or *reason* prescribe to *revelation*; which indeed is the very hinge upon which the whole *Socinian* controversy turns.

But to proceed, and shew, that even *Socinianism* itself by a kind of *Antiperistasis*, took its rise from popery; as the occasion or accidental cause of it, it is to be observed, that those nice, bold, and unjustifiable notions, which many of the schoolmen had advanced concerning the *divine essence* and *persons*, (things which the mind of man can form to itself no *express idea*, nor consequently any *clear comprehensive knowledge* of) caused in *Socinus* such an high loathing of, and aversion to that whole scheme of christian theology, which then obtained in the world, that breaking through all, he utterly deny'd the divine nature of *the Son*, and of *the Holy Ghost*; and so exploded the whole doctrine of the Trinity, as no part or article of the christian religion: frequently alledging also, that the urging the necessity of believing notions so contrary (as he pretended) to the discourses and maxims of natural reason, mightily scandalized and kept off the *Jews*, *Turks*, and rational Infidels, from embracing Christianity. And this consideration he laid no small stress upon.

But

But in answer to it: By his favour, the contrariety of the notions here excepted against, to the maxims of natural reason (as confidently as it has been all along supposed by him) was never yet proved; and as for the *offence* taken at it by *Jews* and *Turks*, he might have remembered, that the doctrines preached by *St. Paul* himself found no better acceptance; as being to the *Jews* a *stumbling-block*, and to the *Greeks* *foolishness*; but neither by him who preached it, nor by those who received it, at all the less valued for its being so. And certainly the christian church would make but an ill bargain, to barter away any one article of her faith, to gain either *Turk* or *Jew*: and I shrewdly guess, that the *Jews* themselves understood *bargaining* too well, to part with their *Moses* for a *Socinian Christ*. But farther, as touching this heresy; the time *when* it was vented in the world, is no less observable than the instruments *by whom*: Satan suiting the work he had to do, to the peculiar qualification of the age, which he was to do it in. For as the schoolmen, who were the greatest and most zealous promoters of the papal interest, sacrificing both reason and religion to the support of it, were in the highest vogue for some ages before; so the age, wherein it began to decline and go downwards, had en-

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tertained a general contempt of, and aversion to that sort of learning, as may appear out of Sir *Thomas More's* defence of *Erasmus*, and other criticks against *Dorpius*, a great patron and admirer of school-divinity. And as for *Socinus* himself, the *Polonian*, who wrote his life, testifies, *illum Scholasticam Theologiam nunquam attigisse*. Thus therefore was he qualify'd (it seems) to baffle the learned part of the world; and having made his first adventure in denying Christ's divinity, and bringing it much lower than ever *Arius* did, the denial of his *satisfaction* unavoidably followed; no mere creature being able, in a strict sense, to *merit of God*, and much less to *satisfy for sin*. So that we see here, how Satan under the plausible plea of reason, introduced a doctrine into the world, which has shook every article of our faith; and in the full compass of it, grasps in the most considerable heresies that ever were; especially those two topping ones, of *Photinianism* and *Pelagianism*. And whosoever shall, by a true and impartial logick, spin it out into its utmost consequences, shall find, that it naturally tends to, and inevitably ends in, the destruction of all religion: and that where *Socinianism* has laid the *premisses*, *Atheism* cannot be kept out of the *conclusion*. But now, that even *reason* itself is but pretended only,

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only, and not really shewn in the doctrines of Socinus, give me leave to demonstrate in one or two instances, instead of many more, that might be assigned.

1. That this doctrine asserts Christ to be a mere creature, and yet ascribes to him *divine worship*, and that both as to *adoration* and *invocation*; and this upon * *absolute* and *indispensable necessity*. So that whereas Socinus says, that the *Jews* and *Turks* are so scandalized at our asserting Christ's deity, I am sure, that by a peculiar and better grounded averfion, they are more scandalized at idolatry. And if Socinus will advance this proposition, that Jesus Christ is not by nature God, let *Jews*, *Turks*, and all infidels of common sense alone to make the assumption; *That then he is not to be worshipped with divine worship.* *Christianus Francken* shamefully baffled Socinus upon this head. And it is impossible for him, or any of his tribe, to maintain it. But,

2. This doctrine asserts also, *That God cannot certainly foreknow future contingents*; as

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Socinus

* See Socinus in his catechism, discoursing of those, who allow not of the adoration and invocation of Christ. *Quid censes* (says he) *de iis, qui ista Christo non tribuunt?* To which he answers: *Censeo illos non esse Christianos; quippe qui revera Christum non habeant: et Jesum esse Christum licet fortasse aperte verbis non audeant, re tamen ipsâ omnino negent.* And elsewhere; *Præstat trinitarium esse, quàm asserere Christum non esse adorandum.*

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Socinus positively concludes in the † eleventh chapter of his *Prelections* ; where, in answering,

† *Cum igitur nulla ratio, nullus sacrarum literarum locus sit, ex quo aperte colligi possit, Deum omnia, quæ fiunt, scivisse, antequam fierent, concludendum est minimè asserendam esse à nobis, istam Dei præscientiam, &c. Socinus, prælectionum capite 11mo.* In stating of which point, the heretick indeed grants, that where God has peremptorily purposed or decreed to do a thing, he infallibly knows, that the thing so decreed shall certainly come to pass, and accordingly may as infallibly foretel it. A great matter, no doubt. But, by his favour ; what is this to God's foretelling of *sinful actions*, together with many passages of great moment depending thereupon (all of them declared by the prophets, many ages before the event of them ?) For these things, as bad as they are, have their events, as well as the best that happen ; and yet cannot be ascribed to God, as the *cause* or *producer* of them. Whereupon, since such events, according to *Socinus*, proceed wholly from the free-will of the immediate agents, he denies God to have any *certain prescience* of them ; for that he will not so much as allow them to be in the number of things in their nature *knowable*, nor consequently to fall within the object of Omniscience itself. Which tho' it extends to all that is *knowable*, yet reaches not beyond it. In answer to which I grant, That such future contingents as depend wholly upon the free turn of man's will, are not antecedently knowable to a finite understanding ; but that they are simply and absolutely in the very nature of them *not knowable*, this I utterly deny ; and on the contrary affirm, that to an infinite understanding they are both *knowable*, and actually *known* too. And the reason of this difference is, because an infinite understanding never looks upon a future contingent, but it looks *beyond* it too ; that is to say, by one single act of knowledge God sees it, both in the *instant of nature before* its production, and in the *instant of nature after* it : Which is the true account of this matter, as being founded in the comprehensiveness of God's knowledge, taking in *past, present, and future*, by one single view. *Scientia Dei ad omnia præsentia se habet.* And how difficult soever (if at all possible) it may be for human reason, to form to itself a clear notion of the *immanent acts* of God ; yet all that is, or can be excepted against the account now given by us, will be found but mere caviil, and not worth an answer.

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ing, or rather eluding such scriptures, as declare the contrary, he all along with a bold impiety degrades the divine knowledge into *mere conjecture*, and no more; and so ranges the all-knowing God with the heathen *oracles*, *soothsayers*, and *astrologers*, not allowing him any pre-eminence above them, but only a better *faculty at guessing* than they had. So that hereby the heretick is either for giving us a deity without infinite perfection, or an infinite perfection without a power of infallible prediction, or an infallibility of prediction without any certain knowledge of the thing foretold: Which, amongst all other wretched consequences, must needs render God such a governour of the world, as, in those many important affairs of it, depending upon the free motions of man's will, shall not be able to tell certainly, what shall come to pass in it, so much as one day before it actually happens. He may indeed (as I shew'd before) shrewdly guess at events, (and so may a wise-man too) but farther than guessing he cannot go. All which are such monstrous assertions, and so scandalously contumelious to the divine nature and attributes; and yet so inevitably resulting from the position first laid down by him, that nothing can equal the prophaneness of them, but the absurdities.

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As for several others of the *Socinian* errors ; to wit, about the nature of the *sacraments*, the *divine covenants*, the *ministry*, and the *church*, with fundry other parts of divinity, I purposely omit them ; and mention only these *two*, as being in themselves not groffer errors in divinity, than inconsistencies in philosophy. So that upon this turn at least, we may worthily use that remark of *Grotius*, in his book concerning the satisfaction of Christ ; *Mirum esse, toties à Socino ostentari rectam rationem, ostendi nusquam*. But to shew compendiously, how he stabs not only the Christian, but also all religions by one assertion : We must know, that the chief corner-stone laid by him in this supposed rational (and by some so much adored) doctrine, is his affirming, *That by the light of natural reason no man can know, that there is a God* ; as you may see in the second chapter of his aforementioned *prelections*. For the proof of which, amongst other places of scripture, he wrests and abuses that in *Heb. xi. 6*. Where the Apostle tells us, *That he who comes to God, must believe that he is*. Mark it, says *Socinus* ; it is here said only, that he must *believe this*, not that he must *know*, or scientifically assent to it. But by his favour, as *this is not here said*, so it is as true, that

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it is *not here deny'd*. And this new teacher of the world should (one would think) have known, that the words *πίστις* and *πιστεύω*, *belief* and *believe*, are not always used in a strict philosophical sense, for an *assent upon testimony*, in contradistinction to an assent upon grounds of science; but generally, and at large, for any firm *assent*, whether upon one account or the other. I say, as this is certain from the use of the word in common speech, so there is nothing to prove, that the Apostle in this sixth verse of the aforementioned chapter uses it otherwise than in this general, popular, and more enlarged sense. Nevertheless, admitting, but not granting, that he took the word in this text, in the strict philosophical sense of it, for an *assent upon testimony*; must this therefore exclude all assent upon *scientific grounds*? Whereas it is certain, that the same thing may be the object both of our *knowledge* and *belief*; and that we may assent to the same proposition, upon the discourses of reason, drawn from the nature of the things contained in that proposition; and withal, upon the affirmation of one, whom, for his knowledge and veracity, we know worthy to be believed. No true philosopher, I am sure, (which *Socinus* never was) either will, or can deny this.

But on the contrary, and in opposition to these new notions, I shall proceed farther, and venture to affirm, *That to believe that there is a God, only because God says so, is a mere petitio principii, and manifestly circular and ridiculous*; as supposing, and taking for granted, the very thing, which as yet is under enquiry, and ought to be proved. For the *being of a God* is the thing here to be proved; and *the testimony of God*, whereby it is to be proved, must presuppose, or rather imply the antecedent being of him, whose testimony it is. Supposing therefore, that the *first revelation* made to man, of the *being of God*, (for it is of that only we now speak) was by an express, audible declaration *of himself to be God*; yet this bare affirmation could not of itself, and in the way of a testimony, oblige a man to believe or assent to the thing affirmed, while he was yet ignorant who, or what he was, from whom it proceeded. For surely, in order of nature, I must know *that it is God who says a thing* before I can believe it true, because *God says it*. Otherwise, suppose some angel had affirmed himself *to be God*, as the devil in effect did, when he challenged to himself the dominion and disposal of all the kingdoms of the world, and required *divine worship* of our Saviour thereupon; none certainly will

will pretend that such a declaration could oblige our assent. But when God affirmed or declared himself to be God, in the first age or ages of the world ; no doubt this declaration was made, in such a transcendent and *supernatural way*, and with circumstances so wonderfully glorious and extraordinary, that he or they to whom it was made, and *Adam* in particular, could not but perceive that the person making it, was a being much above the condition of a creature, and consequently God. And such an acknowledgment of, or assent to the being of a God, was really an *act of knowledge*, as inferring the *cause from the effect* ; and that too, *such an effect*, as could issue from nothing but *such a cause*. For which reason, the assent given in this case could not be founded upon *bare testimony*, nor be formally an act of belief, but an act properly and strictly *scientific*. From all which I conclude, that it is absurd and irrational to suppose, *That we can believe the being of a God, upon the bare affirming this of himself, unless we have some precedent, or concomitant knowledge, that the person so affirming it, is God.* And this utterly overthrows the assertion of *Socinus* ; *That the being of a God is knowable only by faith, or belief.* An assertion much fitter to undermine, than *establish* the belief of a *Deity*, upon the true

true grounds of it ; but it was perhaps for this very purpose, that he intended it.

And thus much for the *first extreme* mentioned ; by which Satan has poisoned the principles and *theoretick* part of religion ; though the poison will be found of that spreading malignity, as to influence the *præctick* too. And so we come to the

Second *extreme* mentioned ; under which, as an *Angel of Light*, he more directly strikes at the practice of religion ; and that is *Enthusiasm*. A thing not more detestable in its effects, than plausible in its occasion. For men being enraged at the magisterial imposing of *traditions* upon them, as a rule of faith equal to the *written word* ; and being commanded withal, to submit their reason to the cheat of an *infallible interpreter*, they too naturally struck off to his extreme, to flight and lay aside the judgment of *all antiquity*, and so to adhere only to the bare letter of the Scripture ; and then both to secure, and authorize their errors, they made their own *reason*, or rather humour (first furnaming it the *Spirit*) the infallible, unappealable judge of all that was delivered in the *written word*. And now, upon these terms, what could keep a man so disposed from coming over to *Socinianism* ; since the prime art and engine made use

use of by *Socinus* himself, for the venting of all his abominations, was a professed defiance of the judgment of all *antiquity*, in matters of *religion*? And what likewise could hinder a man (if his temper inclined that way) from taking up in *Anabaptism*, when he could neither find any clear *precept* for Infant-baptism, nor express *instance* of it in the Scripture; but only probable inferences from thence, and remote consequences; all of them perhaps too little, without the universal tradition of the church, to found the necessity, and perpetuity of such a practice upon? Especially having been encountred by such specious objections, as have been too often produced against it. And thus we see, how both the two forementioned extremes commence upon one and the same principle; to wit, the *laying aside the judgment of antiquity*, both in matters of *Faith*, and in all expositions of Scripture. But *Socinianism* being (as was observed) an heresy much too fine for the gross and thick genius of vulgar capacities, the devil found it requisite sometimes to change his engine, and amongst such as these, to set up his standard in *Familism*, or *Enthusiasm*. A monster, from whose teeming womb have issued some of the vilest, the foulest, and most absurd practices and opinions, that the nature
of

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of man (as corrupt as it is) was ever poisoned and polluted with. For these enthusiasts having first brought all to the *naked letter of Scripture*, and then confined that letter wholly to the exposition of *the spirit*, (as they called it) they proceed farther, and advance this *mystery of iniquity* to its highest *ἀκμή*, by asserting the immediate *indwelling* of the *spirit* in their persons; so that by his impulse and authority, they may, like *Abraham*, *Phineas*, or *Ehud*, be carried out to actions, otherwise, and in other men, indeed unlawful, but in themselves sufficiently warranted by the *spirit's* dispensing with his own *laws* in their behalf, and much more with the laws of men; besides that, according to the same doctrine, he only, who has this spirit, can be a competent judge of what is suggested to him by it. A principle of that diabolical malignity, that it sets men beyond all reach of the magistrate, and frets asunder the very nerves of all government and society. For it owns an impulse lawful, and yet unaccountable; whereby they are empowered to shake off laws, invade the rights and properties of all about them, and, if they please, to judge, sentence, and put to death kings; *because the spiritual man* (forsooth) *judgeth all things, but himself is judged of none*. And these were the persons who

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who would needs set up for the *new lights* of this last age: blazing comets always portending, or rather causing wars and confusions both in church and state; first setting all on fire, and then shining by the flames they raised. But *light* (as we have seen) being so often made the devil's *livery*, no wonder if his *servants* affect to be seen in it.

And now, after this short view of *Popery* and *Enthusiasm*, I hope I shall not incur the suspicion of any byass to the former, if (as bad as it is) I prefer it to the latter, and allow it the poor commendation of being *the less evil of the two*. I confess, that under both, the great enemy of truth strikes at our church and state; and that whether he acts by the fanatick *illuminati*, or by *Vaux's lanthorn*, the mischief projected by him is the same; there being in both *a light* (and something else) *within*, for the blowing up of churches, and kingdoms too. Nevertheless, if we consider, and compare these two extremes together, we shall find enthusiasm the more untractable, furious, and pernicious of the two, and that in a double respect.

1. That the evils of Popery are really the same in Enthusiasm. And,

2. That the little good, which is in Popery, is not in this.

And

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And first : that the evils of both are equal, may appear upon these two accounts.

1. That the enthusiasts challenge the same infallibility, which the papal church does, but are more intolerable in their claim ; for popery places it only in one person, the pretended head of the church, the pope ; but enthusiasm claims it, as belonging to every christian amongst them, every particular member of their church : so that upon a full estimate of the matter, the papacy is only enthusiasm *contracted*, and enthusiasm the papacy *diffused*; the evil is the same in both, with the advantage of multiplication in the latter. But,

2. Both of them equally take men off from the scriptures, and supplant their authority. For as one does it by traditions, making them equal to the *written word* ; so the other does it by pretending the immediate guidance of the *spirit*, without the rule of the said word. For see, with what contempt the father of the Familists, *Henry Nicholas*, casts off the use and authority of it. See also the *Quakers*, (who may pass for the very elixir, the *ultimum quod sit*, and hitherto the highest form of enthusiasts amongst us :) See, I say, how they recur only to the *light within them*; a broad hint to men of sense and experience, how they intend to dispose of the *Scriptures*, when the *Angel of this*

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this light within them shall think fit to screw them up to an higher dispensation ; for then no doubt they will judge it convenient, to *bury this dead letter out of their sight.* But,

2. As for the other proposition mentioned by us, *viz. That the little good which is in Popery, is not in Enthusiasm:* this will appear upon these grounds.

1. Upon a political account. The design of the popish religion is, in the several parts and circumstances of it, to reach and accommodate itself, as much as possible, to all the humours and dispositions of men : And I know no argument, like this *universal compliance*, to prove it *catholick* by. So that a * learned person, in his *Europæ Speculum*, or survey of the religions of the western church, pronounces popery, upon a strict view of the artificial, wonderful composure of the whole frame of it, the greatest piece of practical wit, that was ever yet set on foot in the world. For to shew how in a depraved sense it *becomes all things to all men* ; Is any one of a pious, strict, and severely disposed mind ? There are those retirements, austerities, and mortifications in this religion, which will both employ, and gratify such a disposition. Or, is he, on the other
side,

* Sir Edwyn Sandys.

side, of a loose, jolly temper? Why there is that sufficiency placed in the *Opus operatum*, and the external acts of religion, pieced out with suitable supplies from the bank of merit, which shall make the whole practice of it easy and agreeable. And lastly, if a man has lost his estate, broke his credit, missed of his preferments, failed in his projects, or the like; he may fairly and creditably take sanctuary in some monastery or 'convent; and so pretend piously to leave the world, as soon as he finds that the world is leaving him.

And as for the doctrinal part of the christian religion, *Escobar*, with his fellow *casuists*, has so pared off all the roughness of that, and suited the *strictest precepts* to the largest and *loosest consciences*, that it will be a much harder matter to prove a man a sinner, than to condemn him for his being so; so carefully and powerfully do these men step in between *sin* and *sorrow*: So that if conscience should at any time become troublesome, and guilt begin to lift up its voice, and grow clamorous, it is but to go and disgorge all in *confession*, and then *absolution* issuing of course, eases the mind, and takes off all that anguish and despair, which (should it lie pent up, without vent) might overwhelm, or (as *Ovid* expresses it) even *choak* or *strangle* a man, and either

ther send him to an *halter*, or prove itself instead of one.

And thus these spiritual sinks receive, and divert all those ill humours of desperate discontented persons, (which the world will never want) and which, in all probability, would otherwise discharge and spend themselves upon the state. For he, who is malcontent and desperate, will assuredly either let fall his spirit, and consume himself, or keep it up, and so (as occasion serves) wreak his spite upon the publick: For *spite* will be always working, and either find, or make itself an *object* to work upon. *Cain* was the only person I have read of, who sought to divert his discontent by *building cities*; but the reason was, because then there were none for him to pull down. These, I say, are some of the benefits and benign influences, which the papal constitution bestows upon the outward and civil concerns of such as fall within its communion.

But on the contrary, where the *quicksilver*, or rather *gunpowder* of enthusiasm, (for the fifth of *November* must not claim it all) has once insinuated itself into the veins and bowels of a kingdom, it presently rallies together all the distempers, all the humours, all the popular heats and discontents, till it kicks

down crowns and sceptres, tramples upon thrones, much like those boisterous vapours shut up within the caverns of the earth, which no sooner inspire it into *a quaking fit*, (as I may express it) but it overturns houses and towns, swallows up whole cities, and in a word, writes its history in ruins and desolations; or in something more terrible than all, called a *farther reformation*. But,

2. Popery is likewise preferable to Enthusiasm, in respect of the nature, quality, and complexion of the subjects, in which it dwells.

The popish religion has not been of that poisonous influence, but it has brought up men of accomplish'd learning and morals, of a sublime wit, and all other excellent parts and endowments, which human nature can recommend itself by; whereas Enthusiasm, on the contrary, seldom or never falls upon such dispositions, but commonly takes up its abode in the gloomy regions of melancholy, of an ill habit of body, and a worse of mind; so that the spirit of darkness, brooding upon the ill humours of the one, and the distractions of the other, commonly hatches this monster. For, to look back upon some of the most noted ringleaders, and promoters of our late *disorders* in church and state, were they not such as were first under some *disorder* themselves?

Persons

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Persons for the most part *cracked* either in *fortune*, or in *brain*, acted by preternatural heats and ferments; and so mistaking that for *devotion*, which was only *distemper*, and for a *good conscience*, which too often proved little else but a *bad constitution*. And in such cases certainly we may well collect the malignity of that principle, which never dwells but in such venomous tempers; and rationally conclude, that the *leprosy* must needs have seized the *inhabitants*, where the infection sticks so close to the *walls*.

3. Popery is likewise much more tolerable than Enthusiasm, upon a religious account. The great basis and foundation upon which the whole body of Christianity rests, is the *divinity of Christ's person*, the *history of his nativity, life, and death, his actions and sufferings, and his resurrection and ascension* concluding all. But though the popish church has presumed to make several bold additions to, and some detractions from, the old system of our faith; yet it always acknowledged, and held sacred the foregoing articles, without ever venturing to make any breach upon them. Whereas on the contrary, *Familism*, and *Quakerism*, the two grand and most thriving branches of Enthusiasm, have reduced the whole gospel to *allegories and figures*; and turned the history

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of what Christ *actually* and *personally did and suffered*, into mystical and moral significations of some virtues to be wrought within us, or some actions to be wrought by us. And this in truth does, and must directly strike at the very vitals of our religion, and without more ado, will (if not prevented) effectually send christianity packing out of the world. Popery indeed has forced some bad consequences from good principles, but this destroys the very principles themselves.

Add to this, that the corruptions in a church are not of so destructive an influence, as schisms and divisions from it, the constant effects of enthusiasm. It being much in the body spiritual as in the natural; where that, which severs and dissolves the continuity of parts, tends more to the destruction of the whole, than that which corrupts them. You may cure a throat when it is *sore*, but not when it is *cut*.

And so I have done with this parallel; after which, give me leave to recapitulate to you, in short, some of Satan's principal and most specious abuses of religion, hitherto discoursed of by us. As first, how he made use of the church's abhorrence of *Polytheism*, for the introducing of *Arianism*, in the denial of our Saviour's divinity: And next, how
upon

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upon the declension and fall of that heresy, he took occasion, from the zealous adoration of Christ's person, to bring in a superstitious worship of the Virgin *Mary* his mother, and of his picture in crucifixes, and the like; and so at length appeared, in Popery, a sort of religion, making men in nothing more zealous, than in worshipping such things. And lastly, how, when this also was shaken off with the tales, and legends, that chiefly supported it; and the bare Scripture, with the guidance of the Spirit, made the sole *rule of faith*, without the help of a pretended infallible judge; he then in the greater and more refined wits turned *Socinian*, and in the vulgar played the *Enthusiast*. And thus, having pursued the impostor through all his labyrinths, pulled off his vizard, and turned his *inside* outwards; that we may now, by reflecting upon what is past, the better fence *against his methods* for the future; I shall here proceed to the third and last *general head* proposed; and under it very briefly set down some certain principles, by which he is likely enough to play over his old game again, and, if not counterworked, to trump up the same religious cheats upon the world, with more advantage than before. And these are eminently three.

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1. The stating of the doctrine of *Faith* and *Free Grace* so, as to make them undermine the necessity of a good life. God's mercy is indeed the crown, and beauty of all his attributes, and his grace the emanation of his mercy; and whosoever goes about in the least to derogate from it, may he (for me) find no share in it. But after all, has not the devil endeavoured to supplant the Gospel in a considerable part of it, by the very plea of grace? while some place an irreconcilable opposition, between the efficacy of that, and all freedom of man's will; and thereby make those things inconsistent, which the admirable wisdom of God had made so fairly subordinate. But notwithstanding such fancies, we shall find that religion, in the true nature of it, consists of *action*, as well as *notion*; of good works, as well as faith; and that he believes to very little purpose, whose *life* is not the better for *his belief*.

But to state (as some do) the nature of justifying faith in this; that he who is confident his sins are forgiven him, is by that act of confidence completely justified, and beyond the danger of a final apostacy; so that all sins must for ever after be surnamed *infirmities*; what is this, but to give a man a licence to sin *boldly* and *safely too*, and so to
write

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write a perpetual divorce between faith and good works? The church of *England* owns, and maintains *free grace* as much as any. But still let God be free of it, and not men; who, when he gives it, never makes a bare *crede quod habes*, the only title to it, or character of it.

Antinomianism, as both experience, and the nature of the thing, has sufficiently taught us, seldom ends but in Familism. And the sum and substance of that doctrine is, that it makes men justified from eternity; and *faith* not to be the *instrument*, but only the *evidence of our justification*, as no more than barely declaring to the conscience of the believer, what is already done, and transacted in heaven. Now let us see, whether the former definition of faith can stand upon any other, or better bottom than this of Antinomianism. For if the faith which justifies me, be a firm belief and persuasion, *that my sins are remitted*; it must follow, that my sins are remitted antecedently to that act of belief; forasmuch as the object must needs precede the act: Assent or belief being such an act, as does not produce, but presuppose its object. But if my sins are not actually remitted, before I believe, how can I truly believe they are so? unless the believing a false proposition can make it true;

which would be a piece of logick as new as this divinity. *Bellarmino* indeed fixes this upon the doctrine of all the Protestant churches, and much triumphs in the charge, but falsely and invidiously, and like a jesuit, as (in spite of the character some have given him for learning and candour) he still shews himself upon this subject. For all the reformed churches (especially the church of *England*) disclaim it as a paradox in reason, a pest in morality, and an assertion so grossly absurd and contradictory, that not so much as the least shadow of an argument can be brought for it, unless *credo, quia impossibile est*, may pass for one; which it will hardly ever do, but in the case of transubstantiation.

2. A second principle, by which in all likelihood the devil may, and will (as opportunity serves) impose upon the church, is by opposing the *power of godliness* irreconcilably to *all forms*. And what is this, but in another instance to confront subordinates, and to destroy the body, because the soul can subsist without it? But thus to sequester the divine worship from all external assistances, that by this means (forsooth) it may become wholly mental, and *all spirit*, is, no doubt, a notable fetch of the devil, who, we know, is *all spirit* himself, but never the less a devil for being so.

On

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On the contrary, we have rather cause to fear, that in the strength of this pretence, the worship of Christ may be treated as Christ himself once was ; that is, first be *stripped*, and then *crucify'd*. For would you know, what the devil drives at, in all this seemingly seraphick plea ? Why, first he pleads ; that a set *service*, or *liturgy*, for divine worship is *superstition* and *formality* ; and then, that *churches*, and a *ministry*, are so too. And lastly, that the very letter of the Scripture is but a mere form, (if so much) and accordingly to be laid aside, as in *Familism*, and *Quakerism*, we have shewn, it actually is. But then again, some other short-sighted schismatics were for proceeding upon that doughty principle, *That nothing ought to be allowed in the church, or worship of God, but what is expressly enjoined in his written word* : And accordingly in the strength thereof having run down several of the constitutions of the church of *England*, as forms and rules uncommanded in the Scriptures, they soon had the same principle, every whit as strongly, and more justly, retorted upon themselves, by some of the brotherhood of another class, who (their interest leading them to carry the argument much farther) inferred from thence, *that tythes were to be taken away too*. But this, you will say, was a pinching, ill-natured inference ;
and

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and therefore the presbyterians themselves, (who it seems could find *matter*, as well as *form* in the *revenue*, though none in the *service*, of the church) not only granted, but stiffly contended also, that tythes were by all means to be continued, and retained in the *house of God*, especially since they were so thoroughly convinced, that without them they could not *keep their own*. Now, that certainly must needs be a very unkind and ungrateful principle, which starves the persons who maintain it, and a very weak one too, which affords no consequences, but what make for its own confutation. It must be confessed, that the *power of Godliness*, so much, and so often boasted of by some amongst us, has been a very plausible, well-sounding word; and many a foul fact has been committed under the splendid cover of it. But it is now high time to redeem truth from the slavery and cheat of words; and certainly that can never be imagined to be *the spirit or power of godliness*, which teaches either to *rob*, or *desert* the church, and shews itself in nothing but *Sacrilege* and *Separation*; it being, no doubt, a very odd and strange sort of *zeal for God's house*, which *eats it up*; and a fire much likelier to come from *hell* than *heaven*, which consumes the *altar* itself. But,

3. The

3. The third and last principle, which I shall mention, whereby Satan has so much disturbed and abused the world, and may (for aught appears to the contrary) do so again, is the ascribing such a kingdom to Christ, as shall oppose and interfere with the kingdoms and governments of the world. Christ is indeed our king, and it is our honour and happiness to be his subjects; but where a zealous rebellion destroys monarchy, it renders his greatest prerogative, which is *to be King of Kings*, impossible. There cannot (one would think) be a better design, or a more unexceptionable pretence, *than to advance the sceptre of Christ, in promoting the due authority of his church*; and yet even upon this, the devil can forge such blessed maxims and conclusions as these.

1. That since Christ has two kingdoms in the world, one his *providential* over all things, as he is God; the other his *mediatorial*, belonging to him as head of his church; with a full subordination of the former to this latter, during this world: Men are apt to reckon of Kings as his vicegerents, only in the administration of the former of these, but church-officers as his deputies for governing the latter; and consequently, that the *sceptre* ought to submit to the *keys*, and Christ's *providential* kingdom to come under his *mediatorial*.

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torial. A principle, which the pope and some others (should opportunity serve) know how to make no small use of.

2. That these ecclesiastical deputies of Christ, by virtue of a power immediately derived from him, may meet together, and consult about church-affairs, when and where they shall think fit, in any part or place of their prince's dominions, without his consent; and if they shall judge it requisite, excommunicate him too: And then *Buchanan* tells the world, *That he, who is thrown out of the church by excommunication, is not worthy to live.* And he might, if he had pleased, have told us also, in what soil such doctrines root deepest and thrive best.

3. That these ecclesiastical deputies of Christ have the sole cognizance, and decisive power in all spiritual causes, and in all civil also *in ordine ad spiritualia.*

4. That a minister of Christ uttering any thing, though sedition or treason, in the execution of his ministerial office, and in the pulpit, is not to be accountable for it to any civil court, but only to the tribunal of Christ; to wit, the church (or, in other words, to those who call themselves so.) Forasmuch as *the spirit of the prophets* (they tell us) is to be *subject to, and judged by, only the prophets.*

5. That

5. That when religion is in danger, (of which they themselves are to be the sole judges) they may engage in an oath or confederacy against the standing laws of the country, which they are actually of, and belong to; and then plead, that they cannot in conscience turn to the obedience required by those laws, because of the obligation of the said oath.

And now, if this be the grand charter, and these the fundamental laws of Christ's kingdom, and the execution thereof be committed wholly to a sort of ecclesiasticks, (and those made such by none but themselves) it will in good earnest behove kings and princes to turn their *thrones* into *stools of repentance*; for, upon these terms, I know not, where else they can expect to sit safe. As for the late troubles and confusions caused in these poor kingdoms by the same rebellious ferment, and carried on much more by *black-coats*, than by *red*, we shall find, that they all moved by the spring of a few, specious, abused words. Such as the *spirit*, *christian liberty*, the *power of godliness*, the *sceptre*, and *kingdom of Jesus Christ*, and the like. Touching which it will be found no such strange or new thing for Satan to teach *rebellion*, as well as to manage a *temptation*, in *scripture-phrase*. He can tra-
pan

pan a *Jephtha* into a *vow* and *solemn oath*, and then bind him, under fear of perjury, to perform it by an horrid and inhuman murder. And in a word, by a bold and shameless pretence of God's *cause*, he can baffle and break through any of his commands.

And thus, at length, I have upon the matter dispatched what I had to say upon this text and subject; a subject of such vast importance, that it would be but to upbraid any hearer, to enforce it by any farther argument than itself. For can we have an higher concern at stake, than our happiness in both worlds, or a subtiler gamester to win it from us, than he who understands his game so perfectly well, that though he *stakes nothing*, yet never *plays* for less than *all*, in any of his temptations? which being our case, should not he who is so wise, as to see the danger he is in, be so wise also, as not to cast the least pleasing look or glance upon any of his insidious offers? especially in their first addresses, when they paint and flatter most; considering, that nothing ever flatters, but what is false; nor paints, but what, without it, would appear exceeding ugly. There cannot certainly be a greater and a juster reproach to an intelligent being, than to barter away glory and immortality for baubles and fancies,

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fancies, to lose *paradise* for an *apple*, to damn one's soul to please one's palate; and in a word, to be tempted with such proposals, as the proposer himself shall extremely scorn and laugh at us for accepting. For what is all this, but the height of mockery, as well as misery, the very *sting of death*, and like being *murdered* (as the best of Kings was) by a *disguised executioner*? For such an one the tempter ever was, and will be; never accosting us with a *smile*, but he designs us a *stab*; nor on the other hand ever *frightning* those, whom he would *destroy*. Such a course, he well knows, will not do his work; but that if he would attempt and ruin a man effectually, *silence* and *suddenness* are his surest ways; and he must take heed of giving an alarm, where he intends a surprize. No; we may be sure that he understands the arts of tempting too well, not to know, that the less he appears, the more he is like to do, and that the tempter himself is no *temptation*. He is, indeed, an old thorough-paced, experienced sophister, and has ways to make the very natures and properties of things equivocate. He can, if need be, throwd a glutton in a *fast*, and a miser in a *feast*; and though the very nature of *swine* hurries them into the foulest *dirt* and *mire*, yet to serve a turn,

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turn, we read, he can make them run as violently into the *water*.

Still his way is to amuse the world with shews and shadows, surface and outside; and thereby to make good that old maxim in philosophy, that in all that occurs to the eye, it is not *substance*, but only *colour*, and figure, which we see. This has been his practice from the beginning, from the very infancy and non-age of the world to this day; but whatsoever it was then in those early times, shall we, whose lot has cast us upon these latter ages, and thereby set us upon their shoulders, giving us all the advantages of warning, and observations made to our hands, all the benefits of example, and the assurances of a long and various experience; shall we, I say, after all this, suffer ourselves to be fooled with the wretched, thin, transparent artifices of modern dissimulation? with eyes turned up in prayer to God, but swelling with spite and envy towards men? with a purity above mortal pitch, professed (or rather proclaimed) in *words*, without so much as common honesty seen in *actions*? with reformation so loudly and speciously pretended, but nothing but sacrilege and rapine practised?

This was the just and true character of the blessed times of *Forty-one*; and one would think

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think it a great pity, that the same cheat should pass upon the same nation twice. For nothing but the utter subversion of church and state was driven at, by Satan and his instruments, in what was then done; and *lies, oaths, and armies* (raised in the strength of both) were the means by which they effected it. In short, the nation was to be *blindfolded*, in order to its being *buffeted*; and *Sampson* to have his eyes put out, before he could be made *fool* enough to *kill* himself for company. All grant, that the acts of the *understanding* should in order of nature lead and go before the acts of the *will*; and accordingly *Satan* is always so much a philosopher, as to know, that there is no *debauching* the one, but by first *deluding* the other.

It is indeed no small degree of impudence (as common as it is) for men to dare, to own *pretences*, contrary to what they actually and visibly *practise*; and yet to shew, how much the *world is made for the bold* (as the saying is) this has been the constant course of it with an unfailing success attending it. For as long as *knaves* will *pretend*, and *fools* believe, (as it is seldom but they keep pace with one another) the devil's interest is sure to be served by both. And therefore, if after all this long *scene* of fallacy and imposture (so infinitely dishonourable to our very nature) we would effec-

162 *Satan transformed, &c.*

tually obviate the same for the future; let us in God's name, and in the first place, resolve once with ourselves to act as rational creatures; that is to say, let us carry an open, steady, and impartial eye upon *what men do*, in spite of any thing which they *shall or can say*. And, in the next place, let us, as christians, encounter our grand enemy the tempter, with these two best of weapons put into our hands by the great captain of our salvation, *watchfulness and prayer*; and if by these blessed means, God shall discover and lay open to us his *delusions*, we may thank ourselves, if we fall by his *temptations*.

To which God, the great fountain, and father of light, who alone can scatter all those mists, and defeat those stratagems, which the prince of darkness has hitherto blinded, and abused the world by; be rendred, and ascribed, as is most due, all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.

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SERMON IV.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Our Saviour's Resurrection.

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DISCOURSE

Our Saviour's Resurrection.

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SERMON IV.

The Certainty of our SAVIOUR'S Resurrection.

JOHN XX. 29.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: Blessed are they, who have not seen, and yet have believed.

CHRIST, the great *Sun of righteousness*, and Saviour of the world, having by a glorious rising, after a *red*, and a *bloody* setting; proclaim'd his deity to men, and angels; and by a complete triumph over the two grand enemies of mankind, *sin* and *death*, set up the everlasting gospel in the room of all false religions, has now (as it were) changed the *Persian* superstition into the christian devo-

tion; and without the least approach to the idolatry of the former, made it henceforth the duty of all nations, *Jews, and Gentiles*, to worship the *Rising Sun*.

But as the sun does not display his rising to all parts of the world together, nor to the same region shews his whole light at the same instant; but by weaker glimmerings at the first, gradually ascends to clearer and clearer discoveries, and at length beams it forth with a full diffusion: So Christ here discover'd himself after his rising, not to all his Apostles at once, nor to any of them with the same evidence at first, but by several ascending instances and arguments; till in the end he shone out in his full meridian, and made the proof of his *Resurrection* complete in his *Ascension*.

Thomas we have one of the last in this chorus, resolving to tie his understanding close to his senses; to believe no farther than he could see, nor to venture himself but where he *could feel his way*: He would not (it seems) take a miracle upon hearsay, nor resolve his creed upon report, nor, in a word, see with any eyes but his own. No, he must trace the print of the nails, follow the spear into our Saviour's side, till he even *touched* the miracle, and *felt* the article of the *Resurrection*.

But

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But as in the too inquisitive beholder, who is not content to behold the Sun by reflection, but by a direct intuition of his glorious body, there comes such a *light*, as at the same time both informs, and chastises the over-curious eye; so Christ here, in his discovering himself to this doubting Apostle, condescends indeed to convince him in his own way; but so, that while he complies with his *infirmity*, he also upbraids his *infidelity*; humouring his *patient*, but not sparing his distemper: And yet all this with so gentle an hand, and such an allay of sweetness, that the reproof is only collateral, or consequential, not directly reproaching him for his *unbelief*, but implicitly reflecting upon it, by commanding the *belief* of others. Nothing in the mean time sharp, or corrosive, dropping from his healing lips, even in passing such a reprehension upon his disciple. He only shews him his blind side in an opposite instance, and so leaves him to read his own case in an *antithesis*, and to shame himself by a comparison.

Now, inasmuch as the distinguishing eminency of the blessing so emphatically here pronounced by our Saviour upon a *faith* or assent springing not from *sight*, but a much higher *principle*, must needs import a peculiar excellency of the said faith; for its surmounting all

those high difficulties and impediments attending it, though still with a sufficient reason to found it upon: (for that Christ never rewards any thing with a blessing, but so far as it is a duty; nor makes any thing a duty, but what is highly rational:) This, I say, is most certain. But then as for those various and different objects, which a genuine faith ought to come up to the belief of, we must not think that the same strength, as to the kind, or degree of it, will be able to match them all; for even the particular Resurrection of our Saviour, and that general one of all men at the last day, will be found to stand upon very different bottoms; the many difficulties, if not also paradoxes, alledgable against the resurrection of a body, after a total dissolution thereof, being infinitely greater, and harder to be accounted for, than any that can be brought against the resurrection of a body never yet dissolved, but only once again united to the soul which it had belonged to before.

Besides which, there have, as to this latter sort of resurrection from the dead, been several instances of persons so raised again, both before, and in our Saviour's time. And in truth, as to the very notion of the thing itself, there appears not the least contradiction in it to any known principle of reason: No, nor yet
(which

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(which is more) does there seem any greater difficulty to conceive, how God should re-mand a departed soul into its former body, while remaining entire and undissolved; than that after he had formed a body for *Adam*, he should presently breathe into it (so formed) a *living soul*, as we read in the second of *Genesis*.

So that *St. Paul's* question, in *Acts* xxvi. 8. proceeded upon very obvious, as well as great reason. *Why* (says he) *should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?* pointing therein, no doubt, only to the latter sort of *Resurrection*, specified in the person of our Saviour, and which alone he was at that time discoursing of.

But on the contrary, if we consider that other sort of resurrection of a body raised after an utter dissolution of it into its first materials; neither has the world yet, as to matter of fact, ever seen any example thereof; nor, as to the theory of the same, does the reason of man well comprehend, how it can be done. So that the belief of this must needs have been exceedingly more difficult, than that of the former.

Which observations having been thus premised, I shall now proceed to close them all with something more direct to the main subject of the text, our blessed Saviour's Resurrection. Touching which, though (as it has
been

been already noted) his short continuance under death fully rescued his sacred body from all putrefaction, and consequently rendered his resurrection a thing of much easier speculation, and liable to fewer objections, as well as attended with lesser difficulties, than the resurrection of mens bodies after a total dissolution of them can be imagined to be : Nevertheless, it being a thing so confessedly above all the powers of nature, and so much an exception from the common lot of mortality, it could not but offer itself to the apprehensions of bare reason under great disadvantages of credibility ; especially when the arguments brought from particular *attestations*, were to encounter the prejudice of a general experience ; nothing being more certain, than that men commonly do not so much believe, or judge of things, as they *really are*, but as they *use to be* : *Custom* for the most part passing for the world's *demonstration*, and men rarely extending their *belief* beyond the compass of what they *observe* ; so that bare authority urged against, or beside the report of *sense*, may sometimes, and in some cases, *controul*, yet it seldom *convincés* the judgment ; and though possibly meeting with a modest temper, it may in some cases impose *silence*, yet it very rarely and hardly procures *assent*.

And

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And probably *Thomas's reason*, arguing from the common topicks of the world, might suggest to his unbelief such kind of doubts and objections about his master's resurrection, as these. "*Jesus of Nazareth was put to death upon the cross*, and being dead, was laid, and sealed up in his sepulchre, strictly watched with a guard of soldiers. But I am told, and required to believe, that notwithstanding all this he is risen, and is indeed alive. Now surely things suitable to the stated course of nature, should be believed before such as are quite beside it; and for a dead man to return to life is preternatural; but that those who report this may be mistaken, is very natural and usual. Dead, I saw him; but that he is risen, I only hear: In what I see with my eyes, I cannot easily be deceived; but in what I only hear, I may, and often am.

"Neither can bare report of itself be a sufficient reason of belief; because things confessedly false have been as confidently reported; nor is any thing, though never so strange and odd, ever almost told of, but somebody or other is as positively vouched to have seen it. Besides that the united testimony of all ages and places will not gain credence against one particular experiment

" ment of sense; and what then can the parti-
 " cular report of a few conclude against the
 " general experience of so many people and
 " nations, who had never seen any thing like it?
 " Moreover, as the reporters were but
 " few, so they were generally looked upon,
 " as persons of little depth and great simpli-
 " city, and such qualifications too frequent-
 " ly render men very credulous: They were
 " also frightened and disturbed, and therefore
 " the more likely to mistake; and might
 " likewise be very desirous, both for their
 " master's honour, and their own credit, that
 " he should make good his word, and pro-
 " mise of rising from the dead, by an actual
 " resurrection; and upon that account (as
 " great desire naturally disposes to a belief of
 " the thing desired) they might be so much
 " the proner to believe, that he actually did
 " so. But above all, why did he not, after
 " he was risen, shew himself to the *Sanhedrim*;
 " to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and to the un-
 " believing *Jews*, openly in the temple, or
 " in the market-place? For this doubtless
 " would have been a much more effectual way
 " of convincing the *Jews*, than the bare
 " testimony of his own disciples, which
 " might be liable to many, and those very
 " plausible exceptions, (with the *Jews* at
 " least)

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“ least) since nothing commonly more de-
“ tracts from the credibility of a report, than
“ the credulity of the reporter.

“ Besides all which, there appears also
“ something of inconsistency in the main re-
“ port ; for that some report him to have ap-
“ peared in one shape, and some in another ;
“ whereas truth uses to be uniform, and one
“ man naturally should have but one shape ; all
“ agreeing that in the telling of any story, va-
“ riety (especially as to the chief subject of
“ it) is ever suspicious.”

These, and the like objections, I say, *might*
be, and no doubt, actually were made, both by
Thomas himself, and several others, against the
Resurrection of our blessed Saviour ; and how
little weight soever we may allow them in point
of strict argument, they have so much how-
ever of plausibility and verisimilitude in them,
as may well warrant that remark of Calvin
upon this subject. Namely,

“ * *That Christ in manifesting his resurrection*
“ *to the world, proceeded after a very different*
“ *way, from what mere human sense or reason*
“ *would probably have suggested or looked for in*
“ *such a case.*” Nevertheless I do not much
question

* *Quamquam aliter quam carnis nostræ sensus expeteret, resurrectionem suam Christus patefecit; hæc tamen quæ illi placuit ratio, nobis quoque optima videri debet. Calv. in Harm. Evangelistarum, p. 373.*

question, but the forgoing objections may be fully answered, and fairly accounted for, by the respective solutions, which shall be here given of them, and apply'd to them: And in order to this, I shall lay down these preliminary considerations.

1. That the truth of a proposition being once sufficiently and duly proved, no objections afterwards brought against it can invalidate, or disprove the truth of the said proposition; and consequently, that a man is obliged to believe the same, though several objections should be produced against it, which he is by no means able to answer.

2. That our Saviour having done so many miraculous works in the sight of his enemies beyond all possibility of doubt concerning them, as to *matter of fact*, ought not even by his enemies themselves, who had been witnesses of the said works (upon the strictest terms of reason) to be looked upon in this dispute about his *resurrection*, as a person confined to, or acting by the bare *measures of nature*; and consequently, that all arguments against it, taken from these measures, (they themselves being judges) are to be rejected, as inconclusive and impertinent.

3. That God intended not the gospel, (of which most things relating to the person, and works

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works of our Saviour, no less than his doctrine, makes an integral part) should be received by mankind, upon the *evidence of demonstration*, but by the *rational assent* of faith.

4. That this *faith* ought to be so far under the influence of the *will*, as thereby to render it an act of *choice*, and consequently free; and on that account fit for a *reward*.

5. That in order to its being so, not *all possibility*, but only all *just reason of doubting*, ought to be excluded by it and reckoned inconsistent with it. And,

6. And lastly, that such an irresistible, overpowering evidence of the object, as is conveyed to the mind by clear and immediate sight, is not well consistent with such a *freedom* of the act of faith, as we are now speaking of; forasmuch as it determines the mind to an assent naturally beyond its power to withhold or deny; let men object, or pretend what they will to the contrary.

These considerations, I say, or some of them, duly applied, will account for every thing which is, or may be objected against the Resurrection of our Saviour. And accordingly, in answer to the first of the foregoing objections; to wit, that things, *according to the common stated course of nature*, ought to be believed before such as *are beside it*; and that

that it is *beside*, as well as *above* the course of nature, for a dead man to return to life; but that those on the contrary, who report such strange things, may be deceived in what they report, is very natural and usual.

To this I say, that although I readily grant this latter proposition to be true; yet the former, upon which the objection chiefly bears, I cannot allow to be universally so, but only *cæteris paribus*: that is to say, supposing the ground of the arguments on both sides to be equal; and that for this reason, that it is not always the bare *difference of nature*, in the things or objects proposed to our belief, which is the cause that one of them should be believed by us, rather than another; but it is the *disparity of the grounds and motives*, upon which the said things are to be believed, which must determine our belief in such a case. It must be confessed, that for a man to be mistaken, or judge wrong of a thing, is but too natural to mankind; and that on the other side, for a man to rise from the dead, is both *beside* and *above nature*. Nevertheless, in some cases, and instances, there may be greater reason to believe this latter, (as strange and preternatural as it is) than (in certain cases) to believe some other events, though perfectly natural. As, for instance, that *Lazarus* being dead, and laid

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laid in the grave, should continue there till he rotted to dust, was a thing in all respects according to the course of nature; and on the contrary, that he should rise from thence, after he had lain there four days, was a thing as much *above* and *beside it*; and yet for all this, there was a great deal more reason for the belief of this, than of the other. Forasmuch as this was undeniably attested by a multitude of *eye-witnesses*, who beheld this great work, and neither *could be deceived* themselves, nor have any the *least purpose of deceiving* others, in what they reported. Nor did the *Jews* at all except against what was told them concerning *Lazarus*, upon any of those two forementioned accounts, but fully and firmly believed what they had heard, and that with such an absolute assurance, that they took up designs of killing *Lazarus* himself, to prevent people's flocking after him, and being converted by the sight of him; which, had they believed him still dead, was surely such a method of dealing with him, as common sense and reason would never have thought of. But,

2. Whereas the next objection represents *Thomas* pleading, as a reason of his present unbelief, that he *saw* our Saviour dead and buried; but only *bears* that he is risen; and

that he can hardly be deceived in what he *sees*, but in what he *bears* he easily may.

I answer, that as to the simple apprehensions of these two senses, one takes in its respective object by as *sure* a perception, as the other, though perhaps not so *quick*, nor so *refined*. But the mistake in either of these is not from any failure in the bare simple *perception* of its proper object, but from the *judgment* passed by the understanding faculty upon the said perceptions, in wrongly affirming, or denying something concerning them. Thus in the present case, *Thomas*, on the one side, had seen his Lord dead, and buried, with his own eyes; and on the other, heard that he was risen from the dead, from the mouth of several known witnesses unanimously affirming it; in which argument the point turns not upon this, that the *sight* represents and reports its object more surely than the *hearing*, but upon the qualifications of the witnesses, attesting what had passed concerning the objects of either. And this being so much more advantageous, in point of credibility, on the disciples side, than on *Thomas's*, had there really been an inconsistency between both their testimonies, that of the disciples ought in reason to have outweigh'd and took place of his. But to render his unbelief so much the more inexcusable, there

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there was no inconsistency at all between what had been affirmed by *Thomas* himself, and what was afterwards testified by his fellow-disciples. For as *Thomas* was an ocular witness of Christ's death and burial, so were the other disciples of his Resurrection; having actually seen him after he was risen. And as he had no cause to doubt of their veracity in what they told him, so neither had he any reason to doubt of the credibility of the thing told by them. Forasmuch as *Thomas* himself had seen three instances of persons raised from the dead by our Saviour, during the time of his converse with him: All which must needs, upon the strictest terms of reason, render his unbelief and doubting of our Saviour's own Resurrection (so unquestionably attested) utterly indefensible. But to proceed;

3. It being above objected also, that several reports, found at last to be confessedly false, have yet for some time been as confidently vouched for true, as this now before us was, or could be; and moreover, that there is hardly any report so false, strange, and unusual, but that some have been as positively affirmed by others, to have been eye-witnesses of the same:

In answer to which, all this must be granted to be extremely true, but withal, nothing to

the purpose, since if it proves any thing, it must prove a great deal too much, *viz.* That there is no credit to be rationally given to any thing that we hear, how credible soever in itself. For certain it is, that many, even the grossest *falsehoods*, have been reported, received, and actually believed as true; and *many stories certainly true* have (for a considerable time at least) been absolutely rejected *as false*: And if this must pass for a sufficient reason to deny, or so much as to suspect, and question every thing else reported to us, to be so likewise; then farewell all rational belief, credit, and certainty, as being hereby quite sent packing out of the world. But,

4. It is yet farther argued, that as the united testimony and report of all places and ages will not gain credence against so much as one particular experiment of sense; so much less can the particular report of a few persons conclude any thing against the universal experience of all.

To this I answer; that the account given by those few disciples, of our Saviour's Resurrection, was so far from being contrary to the universal experience and sense of mankind, especially those of the *Jewish* church and nation, that the old Testament, as well as the new, has several examples upon record,

of

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of persons who had been raised from the dead ; which being so well known to the *Jews*, might justly pass rather for so many proofs and confirmations of the credibility of our Saviour's Resurrection, than that our Saviour's Resurrection, after such preceeding instances of so like a nature, should be supposed to carry any thing in it contradictory to the common sense and opinion of the world. Besides all which, those words of *Herod*, upon his hearing of the miracles of Christ, seem here very observable ; *It is John* (says he) *whom I beheaded ; he is risen from the dead, &c.*

These words, I say, so readily uttered by him, without any previous demur, or strain of thought, could not but shew, that the *Resurrection from the dead*, of some particular persons, even as to this life, was no such strange, unheard-of notion with him, and the rest of the *Jews*, but that they were so far at least acquainted with it, as to account it neither *impossible*, nor *incredible*. But,

5. It is again alledged for the invalidating of the report made by the disciples concerning our Saviour ; that the fright and disturbance they were under, upon our Saviour's crucifixion, and the rage expressed by the *Jews* against his disciples, as well as against himself, might naturally enough bring upon

them such a confusion of thought, and aptness to mistake, as might very well lessen the certainty, and consequently take off much of the credit of their testimony.

To which I answer; that *fears* or *frights* do not so operate upon the outward senses, as to supersede or hinder them in their first and simple apprehensions of their respective objects, which are also naturally the *clearest* and most impartial. I grant indeed, that *fear*, and some other passions, may so divert the steadiness and intention of the *intellectual judging* faculty for *some time*, that it cannot *presently* form so exact a judgment upon the objects tender'd to it by the senses, as otherwise it might do. But still this is only an interruption of the acts, rather than any disablement of the faculty; which, as soon as the present passion is over, comes to debate and judge of all objects presented to it, as perfectly as it did before. It is disputed, I know, in natural philosophy, whether the *sense* being duly qualified, and the *object* as duly proposed, and the *medium* fitted to both, the sense can be deceived in the apprehension of its object; and it is generally held in the negative. But supposing that the sense might be deceived, this would make *nothing against us* in the present case; forasmuch as *natural fallibility* may very well consist with *actual certainty*;

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tainty; nothing being more true, than that as a man is capable of *being mistaken*, so on the contrary he is oftentimes *actually not mistaken*; and whosoever is *not mistaken*, is, as to that particular act, and with reference to that particular object, *truly and properly certain*. And this was the very case of the disciples affirming Christ's Resurrection, from a full conviction of their *sight* and other *senses*; a conviction too strong and sure, to admit of any reason sufficient to overbear it. For as to the foregoing objection, from the *greatness of the fear*, then supposed to have been upon them, we have shewn the weakness, or rather nullity of that already; and not only so, but the very proceedings of the *Jews* themselves give us an irrefragable confutation of the same. For, if a *report*, coming from persons under an *extreme fear*, ought upon that score to lose all credibility, surely this should on a very eminent and peculiar occasion, have took place in the *guards set by Pilate to watch Christ's sepulchre*; who (as we read in *Mat. xxviii. 4.*) were seized with such an amazing, dispiriting fear, *that they shook and became as dead men*. Nevertheless the priests, (no fools, though something else) look'd upon them as very credible witnesses of what they had seen, and afterwards related to them: And consequently judg'd their testimony (if contrary)

like to prove so disadvantageous to their design, that they thought they could not bribe them too high, nor buy their silence at too dear a rate; which, had they thought that all that was told them was but idle tales, and founded only in a panick, unaccountable consternation, no doubt, they would never have done at such a price. For *Jews*, of all men, are not wont to part with their money for nothing, or an *idle tale*, which was no more.

6. Some argue again; That since Christ had so expressly and openly before-hand declared, and foretold his Resurrection from the dead, that his adversaries, as well as his followers, had took particular notice thereof; no doubt his disciples thereupon could not but be highly concerned, that their master should make good that his word and promise in the face of the world: And accordingly (as great desire naturally disposes to facility of belief) they might be apt to persuade themselves, that the *event* had indeed answered the *prediction*; and that he was now actually risen, as he had several times promised them, while he lived and conversed with them. Thus their zeal for their Lord's honour might cause them strongly to desire, and that desire as strongly incline them to believe, his Resurrection. So, I say, some argue.

To

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To which I answer ; that as the objection before this represented the disciples in this whole business, as persons extremely *weak*, so this would represent them as equally *wicked*; the former, as men wretchedly deceived, and this latter, as designing to deceive *others*; and that by a vile, fraudulent intrigue, contrived and carry'd on by them, both for their master's and their own reputation; an intrigue so very fraudulent, that the known, unblemish'd simplicity, integrity, and veracity of the persons concerned, and so remarkable throughout the whole course of their lives, makes it morally impossible, and consequently incredible, that persons of such a character should ever be guilty of so foul a practice, and so base a collusion. And no more needs be said for their *vindication* from so impudent a calumny. But,

7. Whereas it is suggested; that nothing could be so powerful and effectual a means, to cause and propagate a belief of Christ's Resurrection, as to have shewn himself, after he was risen, to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the unbelieving *Jews*, openly in the temple, or the market-place, which yet he did not: I answer; that supposing that Christ, after he was risen, had appeared so publicly amongst the *Jews*, as the objection here requires, no doubt

doubt they would have offered to lay violent hands upon him, as they had before designed to kill *Lazarus*, and that for the same reason. In which case, had our Saviour *vanish'd out of their sight* and hands, (as questionless he would have done, and as he had once or twice done from the eyes of his own disciples) what would the *Jews* have concluded from hence, but that they had seen a *ghost*, a *spectre*, or *apparition*? And what conviction would that have wrought in them? why, none at all, but that their senses had been abused, and imposed upon by some magical illusion. And what good effect could this have had upon their minds, for the bringing them to a belief, that *Christ was truly risen*? and much less that he was the *Messias*? which yet was the grand doctrine to be proved by the Resurrection, and of which he had given them abundant proof before, by raising *Lazarus* and others from the dead; which yet we find had no such effect upon the generality of them at all. This to me seems as clear reason, and as natural consequence, as the mind of man in such a case can well be determined by. And no doubt, Almighty God foresaw this, and many more such consequences, which our short reason can neither reach, nor pierce into; forasmuch as his *ways* and *counsels* may, and ought in all reason

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son to be allowed, to proceed by measures quite different from ours; and accordingly, that he might not think fit to vouchsafe the *Jews* the highest evidence of Christ's Resurrection, which it was capable of, who had rejected such high evidence of the like nature before; but rather judged it enough for him to afford them such evidence of it, as was in itself sufficient to convince them, and consequently to render their disbelief thereof irrational, and inexcusable; besides that the highest evidence of an object proposed to be believed, may not consist with such a *worth* and *merit* in the said belief, as may fit it for a *reward*; as our Saviour's words to *Thomas* in the text manifestly import. From all which, I think we may, upon solid grounds, conclude, that the foregoing objection (how plausible soever it may seem at first) argues nothing against the belief of our Saviour's *Resurrection*. But,

8. It is moreover objected, that there is no small disagreement found in the main report about our Saviour's Resurrection; as, that some of his disciples relate him to have appeared in one form, or shape, and some in another, whereas one man naturally can be allowed but one form, and shape, and withal, that he came in to his disciples, while the doors were shut; which seems wholly inconsistent

sistent with the essential dimensions of an human body, which cannot possibly pass through crevices, or key-holes; the nature of quantity making such a penetration confessedly impossible.

To which I answer, according to the second preliminary consideration above laid down by us, that the bare measures of nature, after so many miracles done by our Saviour on the one side, and attested and owned by the *Jews*, as surpassing all *power*, merely *natural*, on the other, ought by no means to be a rule for us to proceed by in the present case. And therefore, to give the objection its full force and advantage, supposing it urged by some *Jew* against the truth of Christ's Resurrection; may we not hereupon ask the said *Jew* this plain question, Were the *Jews* eye-witnesses of the miracles and supernatural works done by our Saviour, or were they not? the latter cannot possibly be said; there being hardly a man in *Jerusalem*, who had not personally seen some of them done. And if the former be granted; upon what ground of reason could those *Jews* deny, but that he, who acted by such a *supernatural power* in some things, might as well do the same in others? Or pretend that he who had raised *Lazarus* from the dead, might not, if he pleased, present himself in different

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different shapes and forms; whether it were by differently qualifying his own body, as the object then offered to be seen, or by differently disposing the visive faculty and organs of sight, in such as were to see it, (as we read he actually did to two of his disciples, whose eyes were so held, that though they looked upon him, yet they could not actually know him, Luke xxiv. 16.) And upon the same ground likewise, might he not as well by his supernatural power appear amongst his disciples, while the doors were shut? John xx. 19. Though these words taken *in sensu diviso*, (as the Logicians speak) and not *in sensu composito*, may be accounted for upon very intelligible grounds; that is to say, that Christ came not through the doors continuing shut, or through chinks, or key-holes, (as some prophane word it) while he passed into the room; but that finding them shut, he, without any noise or difficulty, caused them by his supernatural power to fall open before him. And even this was enough to surprize his disciples so far, as to fright, and make them think, that they saw a spirit. Which sense of the words, as it is fair, and unforced, and agreeable to the common way of speaking, so it infers not in the least that great absurdity in philosophy of a *penetration of bodies*; though still it must be confessed and owned, that in all this dispute,

pute, our Saviour's body, after his Resurrection, was not to be looked upon as a *natural*, but *supernatural* body; that is to say, of quite different qualities from what it had before, albeit we still grant it to have been the same in *substance*. Upon which account, for bare human reason to be able to assign *what could, or could not be done*, by a body so supernaturally qualified (and as it were spiritualized) I think it no reproach to it at all, freely to confess itself wholly at a loss; and consequently, that to argue from the state and natural properties of such bodies as we carry about us, to those of our Saviour's body, after he was risen from the dead, would be a manifest *transfition à genere ad genus*; and so a notorious fault, and fallacy in argumentation.

And thus, I hope, I have at length thoroughly examined, and gone over all, or most of those plausible arguments, which are, or may be brought for the justification of this doubting disciple's backwardness in believing his master's Resurrection; and trust, that I have given sufficient and satisfactory answers to them all. But as for that objection, or rather senseless lye, invented and made use of by the *Jews* (as the Evangelists record) of Christ's body being *stolen and conveyed away by his disciples in the night*, while the soldiers (set

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(set to guard it) slept; it is attended with so many improbabilities and absurdities, and those not more directly contrary to reason, than to common sense and experience, that it hardly deserves a serious confutation.

For can any man of sense imagine that the soldiers, set to watch the sepulchre, and that with so strict and severe an injunction of care and vigilance, from the priests and rulers of the *Jews*, should all of them (and those no inconsiderable number doubtless) fall asleep at one and the same time? No; it is wholly improbable, and consequently upon no terms of reason supposable. Nevertheless, admitting on the other side, that so unlikely a thing had really happened, and the soldiers had all fallen asleep (as the story pretends they did) yet this could not have given the least encouragement to the disciples (at that time but a very few unarmed men) to venture upon such an enterprize: Forasmuch as they neither then did, nor could foresee this accident *of the guards falling asleep*; nor, if when they came upon this design, they had found all of them actually asleep, could they have imagined otherwise, but that the putting of the said design in execution, would have raised such a noise, as must needs have awakened some of the watch; which if it had, the disciples assuredly

surely must, and would have perished in their fool-hardy undertaking; though yet all this while we may very well imagine, that even they, as well as other men, put too great a value upon their lives, to throw them away in so obstinate and senseless a manner. Besides, had the whole matter succeeded as was desired, can we think it morally possible, that the *Jewish* priests, who had so set their hearts upon exposing Christ to the people for an arant impostor, and particularly with reference to what he had foretold of his Resurrection, would not have used their utmost interest with *Pilate*, for the inflicting some very extraordinary and exemplary punishment upon those guards, for betraying so great a trust, as the *Jews* accounted it? But we hear of no such thing; but on the contrary, of a very different way of treating these soldiers, from what the priests and rulers would otherwise have certainly taken; who if the said story had been true, would have been much more liberal in scourging their backs, than they were in oiling their hands. To all which may be added, the utter unsuitableness of the season (as a foreign Divine observes) for such a night-work; it being then at the time of the full moon, (when in those eastern countries the night was almost as bright as the day) and
withall

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withal at the time of the *Passover*; when *Jerusalem* not able to accommodate so vast a multitude from all parts resorting thither upon so solemn an occasion, great companies of them (no doubt) were walking all night about the fields, and other adjacent places; which must needs have made it next to impossible (if not absolutely so) for the disciples (had they got the body of our Saviour into their hands) to have carry'd it off without discovery. All which considerations, together with many more incident to this matter, render this *Jewish* story not more false, and foolish, than romantick, and incredible; and accordingly, as such, I dismiss it.

Nevertheless, not to rest here, but having thus answered, and removed whatsoever could with any colour, or so much as shadow of reason, be brought for an objection against this great article of our Saviour's Resurrection, we shall now pass to such arguments, as may *positively* prove the same; and in order to it, shall premise this observation, namely, That to constitute, or render an act of *assent* properly an act of *faith*, this condition is absolutely necessary; to wit, *That the ground, upon which the said assent proceeds, be something not evident in itself.* And indeed so necessary a condition is this, that without it, *faith* would not be formally distinguished from *knowledge*: *know-*

ledge (properly speaking) *being an assent to a thing evidently and immediately apprehended by us, either in itself, its causes, properties, or effects.* And upon this, and this account only, *assent* is properly said to be *evident*. But now, where such an *evidence* is not to be had, (as in things not falling under our personal, immediate cognizance, it is not) then there can be no other way of assenting to any such thing, or proposition, but from the testimony of some one or more, who may be rationally presumed to know it themselves; but then such an *assent* is (as we have shewn) by no means *evident*, or *scientific*, as not being founded in our own, but in *another's knowledge* of the thing assented to by us. Where, for our clearer understanding of this whole matter, we ought carefully to distinguish between these three terms, *evidence*, *certainty*, and *firmness of assent*. As to the first of which, to wit, *evidence*: a thing is said to be *evident*, *when there is an immediate perception of the object itself assented to, by an act of our sense or reason apprehending it.* And in the next place, as for *certainty of assent*; that is, when a thing is so assented to, that although it be not in itself *evident*, yet that there is a *sufficient ground* for such an assent, and *no rational, or just ground to doubt of it*; as where a thing is affirmed

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firmed or attested, either by God himself, or by some person, or persons, whose credit is unquestionable. And thirdly and lastly, *firmness* of *assent* consists in an *exclusion of all actual doubting, about the thing assented to*; I say *actual doubting*; whether there be a *sufficient* reason against such *doubting*, or no; forasmuch as men may be every whit as confident in a false ungrounded belief, as in a well-grounded and true. Now the difference between these terms thus explained, must, as I noted before, be very carefully attended to, or it must needs occasion great blunder and confusion in any discourse of this nature. And accordingly, to apply the forementioned terms to our present purpose, we are to observe, that although our assent to matters of faith be not upon grounds in themselves *evident*, yet it may nevertheless be upon such as are *certain*; and not only so, but in all matters necessary to be believed (such as our Saviour's *Resurrection*, and other *divine truths*) it must, and ought to be *sufficient*. And the reason of this manifestly is, that if we might be bound to assent to a thing neither *evident* nor *certain*, we might, some time or other, and in some cases, be bound to believe, or assent to falsehoods, as well as truths; which God never requires, as by no means obliging us to the belief of any thing, but where

there is much more reason for our believing, than our not believing it; that being, as I conceive, *sufficient* to warrant the rationality of a man's proceeding in what he believes; especially if it be *necessary*, that either the *affirmative* or the *negative* be believed by him. And for this cause the Apostle commands us, 1 Pet. iii. 15. *to be always ready to give a reason of the hope that is in us*: And the same holds equally in *faith* too, both of them resting upon the same bottom. For neither St. Peter, nor S. Paul, ever enjoin *belief* merely for *believing's* sake; though still they are far enough from requiring us to give a *reason* of the *things* we believe, (for that I own a christian must not always pretend to) but to give a *reason* of his belief of the said things. This every christian may and must, for still his belief ought to be rational.

Thus far therefore have we gone, having proved, that although the Resurrection of our Saviour be a thing in itself *inevident* to us now, and not shewing itself at such a distance of time by any light either *inherent* in it, or personally and immediately perceivable by our senses, or understandings; yet being proposed to our belief upon *certain and sufficient grounds*, it ought, according to the measure of the said *certainties*, to be believed and assented to by us. So that it remains now for

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for us to demonstrate, *that the ground or reason*, upon which we are to believe our Saviour's Resurrection, is *certain*, and by consequence *sufficient*. And accordingly I shall state the belief of it upon these two arguments ; common I confess, but never the less forcible for being so.

1. The constant, uniform affirmation and word of those, who have transmitted the relation of it down to posterity. For this being merely a matter of fact, (the thing in dispute being, whether Christ rose from the dead or no) is by no means knowable by us, who live at so great a distance from the time when it came to pass, but by one of these two ways, *viz.* either 1. by immediate *divine revelation* ; or 2. by *human testimony* or *tradition*. As to the first of which, it is not now-a-days by any of the sober professors of Christianity, so much as pretended to ; nor if it were, ought such pretences to be allowed of. And therefore we must fetch it from the other way, to wit, *tradition* ; to the rendring of which *certain*, and beyond all just exception credible, these two conditions are required.

1. That the persons, who made it, and from whom it originally came, had *sufficient means and opportunities* to know, and to be informed of the truth of what they reported to the world. And,

2. That they were of that unquestionable sincerity, as truly and impartially to report things as they knew them, and no otherwise.

Now for the

1. *First* of these two conditions, *viz.* That the reporters had sufficient opportunity to know the things reported by them, this is undeniable; forasmuch as they personally conversed with Christ, and were eye and ear-witnesses of all, that was done by him, or happened to him, as it is in the first epistle of St. *John*, ch. i. ver. 3. *That, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, declare we unto you.* And surely, if knowledge might make a man a competent witness, there is none for *evidence*, as well as *certainty*, superior to that of sense: and if the judgment of any one sense rightly disposed, be hardly or never deceived, surely the united judgment of them all together must needs upon the same terms pass for infallible, if any thing amongst us poor mortals may, or ought to be accounted so. But,

2. *As for the other* forementioned condition of a competent witness, *viz.* that he be a person of such unquestionable *sincerity*, as to report the *naked truth* of what he knows: This with respect to the Apostles in the present case, appears in a great measure from the meanness
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of their parts, abilities, and education, naturally disposing men to plainness and simplicity; and simplicity has ever yet been accounted one good step to sincerity. They were poor, mean fishermen, called in *Acts* iv. 13. *ἰδιῶται καὶ ἀγράμματοι*, in plain terms, persons wholly illiterate, and unacquainted with the politick fetches of the world, and utterly unfit to conceive, and more unfit to manage any farther design, than only to deceive and circumvent the contemptible inhabitants of the watry region. And could such men (think we) newly coming from their fishermen's cottages, and from mending their nets, entertain so great a thought, as to put an imposture upon the whole world, and to overturn the *Jewish* laws, and the *Gentile* philosophy, with a new religion of their own inventing? It is not so much as credible, and much less probable.

But besides, admitting these persons to have been as subtle, and deeply knowing, as they were in truth shallow and ignorant; yet still *they were men*, and consequently of the same *passions* and *desires* with other men; and being so, that they should relinquish all the darling pleasures, profits, and accommodations of life; and voluntarily expose themselves to scorn, tortures, persecutions, and even

death itself, only to propagate a story, which they themselves knew to be a lye; and that an absurd, insipid, incredible lye, (if a lye at all) this certainly was a thing unnatural, and morally impossible. For can any man, not abandoned by the native sense of man, bring himself to be in love with a gibbet, or enamour'd with a rack? Can these tortures, which are even able to make a man *abjure the truth*, allure him to own and assert, and *even die for a lye*? Wherefore, there being no imaginable objection against the disciples *sincerity* and *veracity*, (which was the other qualification of a competent witness mentioned by us) it follows, that their testimony concerning our Saviour's Resurrection is to be accepted and believed as true, certain, and unexceptionable. And so much for the first argument. But,

2. The other argument shall be taken from those miraculous *works*, by which the Apostles confirmed the testimony of their *words*. He, who affirms a thing, and to prove the truth of it, does a miracle, brings God as a voucher of the truth of what he says. And therefore he, who shall affirm, that the Apostles proclaimed to the world things false, must affirm also, that they did all those miracles by their own, or the devil's power; or, if they did them by God's, then that God
lent

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lent the exercise of his power to impostors, to confirm and ratify the publication of a lye, for the beguiling and deceiving of mankind; and that in a matter of the highest and most important concern to them, that can possibly be. Which is so blasphemous for any one to assert, and so impossible for God to do, that the very thought of it is intolerable.

So that now the only thing remaining for our full conviction, is to shew, that there is sufficient reason to persuade men, that such miracles were really done by the Apostles, to confirm the doctrines delivered by them. And for this we are to hear the only proof, which things of this nature are capable of; to wit, the voice of general, long continued, and uninterrupted antiquity; that is to say, the united testimony of so many nations, for so many ages successively, all jointly agreeing in one and the same report about this matter; which report, if it were untrue, must needs have been framed by combination and compact amongst themselves. But that so many nations of such various tempers, such different interests, and such distant situations from one another, should be able all to meet and combine together, to abuse and deceive the world with a falshood, is upon all the rules and principles of human reasoning incredible. And
yet

yet on the other side, that this could be done without such a previous combination, is still more incredible; and consequently, that neither the one nor the other ought to be reckoned in the number of those things, which we account possibilities. And now, all that has been disputed by us hitherto, with reference to the Apostles, and Disciples, as to their believing and preaching Christ's Resurrection to the world, may be naturally *drawn from*, and as naturally *resolved into* these following conclusions.

1. That no man of common sense or reason undertakes any action considerable, but for the obtaining to himself some good, or the serving some interest thereby, either in this world, or in the next.

2. That our Saviour's disciples, though they bore no character for political knowledge, or depth of learning, yet shewed themselves, in the whole course of their behaviour, men of sense and reason, as well as integrity.

3. That being such, and so to be considered, had they known Christ's Resurrection to have been a falsehood, they would never have preached it to the world, to the certain bringing upon themselves thereby the extremity of misery and persecution in this life,
and

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and a just condemnation from almighty God, in that to come.

4. That had the Resurrection of our Saviour been indeed false and fabulous, his disciples could not but have known it to be so.

To which I shall add the

5. That in things proposed to our belief, a man *safely may*, and rationally ought to yield his assent to that, which he finds supported with better and stronger arguments (though short of a demonstration) than any that he sees producible against it.

From all which it follows, that our Saviour's Resurrection having been attested by persons so unexceptionably qualified for that purpose; whether we consider the opportunities they had of knowing thoroughly the things testified by them, or their known sincerity and veracity in reporting what they knew, as likewise the miraculous works done by them, in confirmation of what they delivered, and all this brought down to us by unanimous, undisputed tradition; and moreover, since such tradition has greater ground for its belief, than the discourse of any man's particular reason can suggest for its disbelief, (universal tradition being less subject to error and fallacy than such discourses or argumentations can pretend to be;) and lastly, since it is a manifest absurdity in reasoning to reject,

reject, or disbelieve that, which a man has more ground and reason to believe, than to disbelieve: I conclude, that the doctrine of the Apostles concerning our Saviour's Resurrection ought, upon the strictest terms of reasoning, to be believed and assented to, as a most certain, irrefragable, and uncontestable truth; which I take to be the grand conclusion to be proved by us.

In fine, if I have brought the point hitherto disputed of, so far, as to make it appear, that there are greater and stronger arguments for the belief of our Saviour's Resurrection, than for the doubting of it, (as I hope I have effectually done) I conceive this to be sufficient in reason, to strip men of all justification of their unbelief of the same, and consequently to answer all the great ends of practical religion, the prime business and concern of mankind in this world. Albeit it must be still confess'd, (as we have noted from *Calvin* before) that there are several passages relating to this whole matter, neither so demonstrative, nor yet so demonstrable, as might be wished. Nevertheless, since it has pleased almighty God to take this and no other method in this great transaction; I think it the greatest height of human wisdom, and the highest commendation that can be given of it, to acquiesce in what *the divine wisdom*
has

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has actually thought the most fit in this affair to make use of.

And now to close up the whole discourse ; with what can we conclude it better, than with a due encomium of the superlative excellency of that mighty grace, which could, and did enable the disciples so firmly to believe, and so undauntedly to own and attest their belief of their blessed master's Resurrection ? and that, in defiance of the utmost discouragements, which the power, malice, and barbarity of the bitterest enemies could either threaten or encounter human nature with.

And to advance the worth of this faith, if possible, yet higher, we are to know, that it consists not, (as has been hinted already) in a bare act of *assent* or *credence*, founded in the determining evidence of the object, but attended also with a full choice and approbation of the will ; for that otherwise it could not be an act properly *free* ; nor consequently valuable (and much less meritorious) in the esteem of God or man. And therefore some of the ablest of the schoolmen resolve faith, not into a bare *credence*, or act of the *understanding* only, but also into a pious disposition of the *will*, preventing, disposing, and (as it were) bending the former, to close in with such propositions, as bring with them

a *suitableness* as well as truth ; and it is not to be doubted, but inclination gives a powerful stroke and turn towards *credence*, or *assent*. So that while *truth* claims and commands the same, and *suitableness* only draws and allures it, yet in the issue this obtains it as effectually, as even truth itself. Not that I affirm, or judge, that in strictness of reason this ought to be so, but that through the infirmity of reason is but too manifest, that very often (if not generally) it falls out to be so.

In the mean time we may here see, and admire the commanding, and (I had almost said) the meritorious excellency of faith: That while carnal reason argues, sense is stubborn and resists, and many seeming impossibilities occur, it can yet force its way through all such obstacles, and like *Lazarus*, (though bound hand and foot, as it were) break even through mortality, and death itself.

But as for those, whom nothing will satisfy, but such a faith as shall out-vie Omnipotence itself, by believing more than ever Omnipotence can do, I mean *contradictions* ; and especially that grand astonishing one to all human reason, called *Transubstantiation* : we poor christians, I say, of a much lower form, presume not to aspire to such a pitch, and sort of faith ; but think it sufficient humbly
to

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to own, and admire that *faith*, which the Apostle tells us can make its way, through the whole *eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, and that by subduing of kingdoms, putting to flight armies, and not only believing, but also working miracles, and that to such a degree, as even to become a *miracle itself*. For (as we read there also) it was *able to stop the mouths of lions*; and which was more, the mouth of a disputing reason. And certainly that faith, which our Saviour told us could *remove mountains*, might (had our Saviour but given the word) without the interposal of an Angel, have removed *also the stone from before the door of the sepulchre* as great as it was.

He who would have a masculine, invincible faith indeed, must in many cases baulk his sight, and the farther he would *leap*, the *shorter* he must *look*. Christ wrought many of his miraculous cures upon such blind men as believed: and as their faith contributed not a little to the curing of their blindness, so their blindness seemed a no improper emblem of their faith.

For which reason, may not he, who requires no less than a sensible, irresistible evidence for all his principles, and not content with a sufficient *certainty* for the same, will be satisfy'd with nothing under strict syllogism and demon-

demonstration for every Article of his creed; may not such an one, I say, be very pertinently and justly reply'd to, in those words of our Saviour to the *Jews*, *what do you more than others?* And yet farther, would not even the heathens and ancient philosophers have done as much; would not they have believed whatsoever you could have demonstrated to them; allowed you so much persuasion for so much proof? And so much assent for so much evidence? And in a word, would not *Aristotle* himself have been convinced upon the same terms, on which *Thomas the disciple* was?

But a christian should go a large step higher and farther, read all his *credenda* in an 'Αυτὸς ἑφ' ἑ, sacrifice even his *Isaac*, the first begotten of his reason, and most beloved issue of his brain, whensoever God shall think fit to be honoured with such a victim. For such a belief, though it has not the *evidence* of *sight*, yet it has all, which *sight* and *evidence* can be valued for; that is to say, it has something *instead* of it, and *above* it too; so that where sense and carnal reason oppose themselves, fly back, and will by no means yield, *faith* comes in with the *demonstration* of the *spirit* and *power*, scatters the dark cloud, and clears up all.

And in nothing certainly is the heroick excellency of such an entire submission of our
reason

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reason to divine revelation so eminently shewn, as in this, that a man hereby ventures himself, and his eternal concerns, wholly upon God's bare word; and questionless nothing can so powerfully engage one of a generous spirit, even amongst men, as an absolute confidence in him, and an unreserved dependence upon him. And if there be any way possible for a creature to oblige his creator, it must be this.

Wherefore, let us in this state of darkness and mortality, rest content to see the great things of our religion, but *in part*, to understand the Resurrection but darkly, and to view the *rising sun* (as I may so express it) but *through a crevice*; still remembering, that God has in this world appointed *faith* for our *great duty*, and in the next, *vision* for our *reward*.

To which may be, of his infinite mercy, vouchsafe, in his good time, to bring us all; to whom be render'd and ascribed, as is most due, all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.

*Obedience for Conscience-sake, the
Duty of good Subjects.*

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

WESTMINSTER-ABBEY, on the Fifth
of *November*, 1663.

P 2

Question for Conscience-peace, the
Day of good Subjects

COMMON

of the Minister of the Army, on the
of November, 1663.

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SERMON V.

Obedience for Conscience-sake,
the Duty of good Subjects.

ROM. xiii. 5.

*Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not
only for Wrath, but also for Consci-
ence-sake.*

THIS chapter is the great and noted re-
pository of the most absolute and bind-
ing precepts of allegiance, and seems so fitted
to this argument, that it ought to be always
preached upon, as long as there is either such
a thing as obedience to be enjoined, or such a
thing as rebellion to be condemned.

In the words that I have pitch'd upon, there
are these two parts:

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1. A duty enjoined, *ye must needs be subject.*
2. The ground or motive of that duty ; *for conscience-sake.*

For the first of these ; since men are apt to draw arguments for or against obedience from the qualifications of the persons concerned in it, we will consider here,

1. The persons, who are commanded to be subject.

2. The person, to whom they are commanded this subjection.

1. For the persons commanded to be subject, they were *believers*, the *faithful*, those who were the church of God in *Rome*, as we see in Chap.i.7. *beloved of God, called to be Saints.* Neither were they Saints only, but Saints of the first rank and magnitude, heroes in the faith, verse 8. *your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.* Their faith made *Rome* no less the metropolis of Christianity, than of the world. The *Roman* faith and fortitude equally spread their fame. And as the pagan *Romans* overcame the world by their fortitude, so did the christians by their faith.

But for the modern *Roman* Saints, it is their powder, not their faith, that has made such a *report* in the world ; a race much different from their primitive ancestors, whose piety could not cancel their loyalty. No religion could

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could sanctify treason; christian liberty was compatible with the strictest allegiance; they knew no such way as to put the sceptre into Christ's hand, by pulling it out from their prince's.

2. In the next place; the person, to whom they were commanded to be subject, was *Nero*; a person so prodigiously brutish, that whether we consider him as a man, or as a governor, we shall find him a *Nero*, that is, a monster, in both respects.

And first, if we consider his person; he was such a mass of filth and impiety, such an oglio of all ill qualities, that he stands the wonder and the disgrace of mankind. For, to pass over his monstrous obscenity, he poisoned *Britannicus* for having a better voice; he murdered his tutor *Seneca*; he kick'd his wife big with child to death; he killed his mother, and ript her up in sport, to see the place where he lay: so implous, that he would adore the statues of his Gods one day, and piss upon them another. But then, take him as an emperor, and he was the veriest tyrant and blood-sucker, the most unjust governor that ever the world saw: one, who had proceeded to that enormity, that the very army, the only prop of his tyranny, deserted him; and the senate sentenced him to be ignominiously drawn upon a hurdle, and whipt to death. He

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He was one, who had united in himself the most different and unfociable qualities, namely, to be *ridiculous*, and to be *terrible*; for what more ridiculous than a *fiddling emperor*, and more *terrible* than a *bloody tyrant*? In short, he was the plague of the world, the stain of majesty, and the very blush of nature. One, who seemed to be sent and prepared by providence, to give the world an experiment, *quid summa vitia in summâ fortunâ possint*; and by a new way of confirmation, to seal to the truth of Christianity, by his hatred of it.

And yet after all this, the believing *Romans* are commanded subjection even to this *Nero*, the best of saints to the worst of men: And indeed it was this, that gave a value to their obedience; for to be loyal to a just, gentle, and vertuous prince, is rather privilege than patience. But the reason of the whole matter is stated in these words, verse 1. *The powers that are, are ordained of God.* Obedience to the magistrate is obedience to God at the second hand; and as a man cannot be so wicked, so degenerate, but that still he is a man by *God's creation*; so neither can the magistrate be so vile, and unjust, but that still he is an officer by *God's institution*. And it is no small part of the divine prerogative, to be able to command *homage* to the worst of kings, as

the

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the majesty of a prince is never more apparent, than in its subjects submission to an unworthy deputy or lieutenant. The baseness of the metal is warranted by the superscription, the office hallows the person; neither is there any reason, that the vileness of one should disannul the dignity of the other; forasmuch as he is *made wicked* by himself for the devil, but he is *stamp'd a magistrate* by God. We are therefore to overlook all impieties and defects, which cannot invalidate the function. Though *Nero* deserves worthily to be *abhorred*, yet still the *emperor is*, and ought to be sacred. And thus much for the duty, and the persons to whom it relates. *Ye must needs be subject.*

2. I come now to the second part, *viz. the ground or motive* upon which this duty is enforced; *Ye must needs be subject for conscience-sake.* A strange argument, I must confess, if we were to transcribe Christianity from the practice of modern Christians, with whom it would proceed thus rather; ye must needs shake off all government, and rebel for *conscience-sake.* No such instrument to carry on a refined, and well-woven rebellion, as a *tender conscience*, and a sturdy heart. He who rebels conscientiously, rebels heartily; such an one carries his God in his scabbard, and his religion upon the point of his sword. He
strikes

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strikes every stroke for salvation, and wades deep in blood for eternity. But what now must be said of those impostors, who in the name of God, and with pretended commissions from heaven, have bewitched men into such a religious rage? Who have preached them out of the deadly sin of allegiance, into the angelical state of faction and rebellion? Whose saints were never listed but in the muster-roll for the field; and whose rubrick is writ only with letters of blood. I believe, upon a due survey of history, it will be found, that the most considerable villanies, which were ever acted upon the stage of Christendom, have been authorized with the glistering pretences of conscience, and the introduction of a greater purity in religion. He who would act the *destroyer*, if he would do it effectually, should put on the *reformer*; and he who would be creditably, and successfully a villain, let him go whining, praying, and preaching to his work; let him knock his breast, and his hollow heart, and pretend to *lie in the dust before God*, before he can be able to lay others there.

But some may reply and argue, that conscience is to be obey'd, though erroneous; and therefore, if a saint (for with some all rebels are such) stands fully persuaded in his conscience,

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ence, that his magistrate is an enemy to the Gospel, and the *kingdoms of Jesus Christ*, and so ought to be resisted; is not such an one engaged to act according to the dictates of his conscience? And since God would punish him for going against it, is it not high tyranny for the magistrate to punish him for complying with it?

To this I answer; that he who looks well into this argument, looks into the great *Ar-
canum*, and the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of Puritanism; which indeed is only *reformed Jesuitism*, as Jesuitism is nothing else but *Popish Puritanism*: And I could draw out such an exact parallel between them, both as to principles and practices, that it would quickly appear, that they are as truly brothers, as ever were *Romulus* and *Remus*; and that they suck'd their principles from the same *wolf*.

But to encounter the main body of the argument, which, like the *Trojan* horse, carries both arms and armed men in the belly of it; I answer, that to act against conscience, erroneous, or not erroneous, is sinful; but then the error adds nothing to the excusableness of the action, when the same charge of sin lies upon the conscience for being erroneous. No man can err in matters of constant duty, which God has laid open to an easy and obvious discernment, but he errs with
the

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the highest malignity of wilfulness : And if any plea to the contrary be admitted, it will unhinge all society, and dissolve the bonds of all the governments in the world.

The magistrate is to take no notice of any man's erroneous conscience, but (if reason and religion will not set it right) to rectify or convince it with an axe, or the gibbet. *He*, who would without controul disturb a government, because his erroneous conscience tells him he must, does all one, as if he should say, that it is lawful for a man to commit *murder*, provided that he, who does it, be *first drunk*. It were a sad thing, if the laws should be at a stand, and the weal-publick suffer, because such and such persons are pleased *to be in an error* ; (though by the way they are seldom or never seen to be so, but very beneficially to themselves.) He who brings down the law to the exceptions of any man's conscience, does really place the legislative power in that man's conscience ; and by so doing, may at length bring down his own neck to the block. For certainly that subject is advanced to a strange degree of power, whose conscience has a prerogative to command the laws.

And I do not think ever to speak a greater truth than this, that the non-execution of the laws

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laws upon such hypocrites has been the fatal cause, which drew after it the execution of the supreme legislator * himself: and believe it, if a governor ever falls into the mercy of such persons, he will find that their *hands are by no means so tender, as their consciences pretend to be.* All indulgencies animate such persons, but mend them not: All reconcilements, and little puny arts of accommodation, are but as spiders webs, which such hornets will quickly break through, and as truces to an old enemy to rally up his forces, and to fall on, when he sees his advantage; nothing will hold a sanctified, tender-conscienced rebel, but a prison, or a halter. And these are not angry words, but the oracular responses, and bitter truths of a long and bleeding experience; an experience, which began in a rebellion against an excellent Prince, proceeded to his imprisonment, and concluded in his murder.

But because conscience is a relative term, and so must refer to something, which it is to be conversant about; I shall shew, that men are commanded a *subjection to*, and dehorted from a *resistance of* the civil magistrate, by two things.

1. The absolute unlawfulness; and
2. The scandal of such a resistance.

1. For

* King Charles the First.

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1. For the first of these, its *absolute unlawfulness*. Rebellion surely is a mortal sin, *mortal* to the rebel, and *mortal* to the prince rebelled against; it is the violation of government, which is the very soul and support of the universe, and the imitation of providence. Every lawful ruler holds the government by a certain deputation from God; and the commission, by which he holds it, is his word. This is the voice of Scripture, this is voice of Reason. But yet we must not think to carry it so; for although in the Apostles time this was divinity and truth, yea, and truth also stamp'd with necessity; yet we have been since taught, that Kings may be lawfully resisted, cast off, and deposed; and that by two sorts of men.

1. The sons of *Rome*: And,

2. Their true offspring, the sons of *Geneva*.

1. For the first of these. It would be like the stirring of a great sink, which would be likelier to annoy, than to instruct the auditory, to draw out from thence all the pestilential doctrines and practices against the royalty and supremacy of princes.

Gratian, in the decrees, expressly says, *imperator potest à papâ deponi*. And *Boniface VIII.* in *lib. 1. Extrav. Com. titulo de majoritate, & obedientiâ*, has declared the subjection, or rather,

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rather, the slavery of princes to the pope fully enough. 1. For first he tells us, that Kings and secular powers have the temporal sword, but to be used *ad nutum sacerdotis*. 2. He adds, “ *Porro subesse Romano pontifici omni humanæ creaturæ, declaramus, dicimus, definimus, & pronuntiamus omninò esse de necessitate salutis.*”

And how far Princes are to be under him we have a farther account. 1. They ought to kiss his feet. 2. He may depose them. 3. No Prince may repeal his sentence, but he may repeal the sentences of all others. 4. He may absolve subjects from their allegiance. These, and some such other impious positions, they call *Dictatus Papæ*; and were published and established by Pope Gregory VII. in the *Roman synod*, in the year one thousand seventy six, as *Baronius* tells us, *ad annum Christi millesimum septuagesimum sextum. Numero trices. 1^{mo}. & trices. 2^{do}.*

And that we may see, that he was not wanting to execute, as much as he had the face to assert; *Platina* tells us in his life, how he deposed *Henry IV.* emperor of *Germany*; and some of the words of his bull are these. “ *Henricum imperatoriâ administratione, regique dejicio: Et christianos omnes imperio subiectos juramento absolvo.* The whole bull

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bull is extant in the bullery of *Laertius Cherubinus*, Tom. 1. p. 12. printed at Rome 1617. And then at last, with an equal affront to the majesty of Scripture, as well as to that of Princes, he puts his foot upon the Emperor's neck, quoting that passage in the Psalm, *super aspidem & basiliscum, thou shalt tread upon the asp and the basilisk*; a great encouragement surely for princes to turn papists. But to contain ourselves within our own country, where we are most concerned; the pope, we know, deposed King *Henry VIII.* and Queen *Elizabeth*, as far as the words, and the *bruta fulmina* of his bulls could depose them; absolving their subjects from their allegiance, and exposing their dominions to the invasion of any, who could invade them. The words of *Pius V.* in his bull against Queen *Elizabeth* are remarkable; which translated into *English*, run thus: "Christ, who reigns on high, and to
" whom all power in heaven and earth is gi-
" ven, has committed the government of the
" one catholick and apostolick church only to
" *Peter*, and his successor the pope of *Rome*.
" And him has he placed prince over all na-
" tions and kingdoms, to pluck up, destroy,
" scatter, overturn, plant and build up; in
" order to the keeping of God's faithful people
" in the bond of charity, and in the unity of
" the spirit." And

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And is not this a bold preface, able to blast the prerogative of all Kings at a breath ? But it is well, that *curs'd bulls* have short *horns*. Yet all this is but the voice of his *thunder*, the *bolt* is to come afterwards. Let us see how he proceeds.

“ Wherefore, (says he) being upheld in
“ the supreme throne of justice by Christ him-
“ self, who has placed us in it, we declare
“ the aforesaid *Elizabeth* an heretick, and all
“ who adhere to her, to have incurred an a-
“ nathema, and to be actually divided and
“ cut off from the unity of Christ's body.
“ Moreover, we declare her to be deprived of
“ all right to her kingdom, and of all domi-
“ nion, dignity and privilege belonging there-
“ to. Withal, that the subjects of that king-
“ dom, and all others, who have any ways
“ swore obedience to her are fully absolved
“ from their oath, and from all debt of ho-
“ mage and allegiance to her; and accordingly
“ by these presents we do absolve them. Fur-
“ thermore, we charge and enjoin all her sub-
“ jects, to yield no obedience to her person,
“ laws, or commands. Given at *Rome* in the
“ year 1575, in the fifth year of the pope's
“ reign, and the thirteenth of Queen *Eliza-*
“ *beth's.*”

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It is possible now, that some *English* and *French* papists may dislike this doctrine of deposing Kings ; but they owe this to their own good-natures, or some other principle ; or indeed chiefly to this, that they live under such *Kings, as will not be deposed*. But that they owe it not to their religion, which (by little less than a contradiction in the terms) they miscall *Catholick*, is clear from hence: That by the very essential constitution of their faith, they are bound to believe, and to submit both their judgments, and practices, to all that is determined by a general council confirmed by the Pope. This being premised, we must know, that the fourth *Lateran council*, which they acknowledge *general*, and to have had in it above twelve hundred fathers (as they call them) in the third chapter *de hæreticis*, thus determines : “ That all secular
 “ powers shall be compelled to take an oath
 “ to banish hereticks out of their territories.
 “ *Moveantur, & si necesse fuerit, compellantur*
 “ *potestates sæculares, cujuscunque sint officii,*
 “ *ut pro defensione fidei publicè juramentum præstent, &c.*” But what now, if persons will not do this ? If they refuse to be thus commanded like subjects, and to place their royal diadems upon their bald *pates* ?

Why

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Why then the Fathers, or rather the Lords of the council thus proceed. " If (say they) " Princes refuse to purge their dominions " from heresy ; let this be signified to the Pope, " that he may forthwith declare their subjects " absolved from their allegiance, and expose " their territories to be seized upon by Ca- " tholicks."

This is the canon of that *concilium Lateranum magnum*, (for so they term it) in which were above twelve hundred fathers, (so they tell us) a council by them acknowledged to be *general*, and confirmed by the Pope. Now I demand, is this council *infallible*, or is it not ?

1. If not, then good-night to their *Infallibility*, if the Pope and twelve hundred fathers, met together in a general council, be not infallible.

2. If it be *infallible*, (as they all do, and must say, unless they will deny a fundamental article of their faith) then they must all believe it, and by consequence acknowledge, that the Pope has power to excommunicate and depose Kings, and to give away their kingdoms, in case of heresy ; and *what heresy* is, they themselves are to be judges? This we may be sure of, that all protestant Kings are hereticks with them; and so the

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Pope may, when he will, and undoubtedly will, when he *can*, give away their kingdoms. I think it concerns Kings to consider this, and when they have a mind to submit to the Pope's tyranny, to subscribe to the Pope's religion.

Thus much for the *Lateran* council ; and to place the argument above all exception, this very council is expressly *confirmed* by that of *Trent*, in the 24th session of reformation, chap. 5. p. 412. also in the 25th session about reformation. chap. 20. p. 624.

Now shew me any thorough-paced *catholic*, who dares refuse to subscribe to the *council of Trent* ; which being so, it is a matter of amazement to consider, that the men of this profession should be of such prodigious impudence, as to sollicite any protestant Prince for protection, nay, indulgences to their persons, and religion ; when by virtue of this religion they hold themselves bound, under pain of damnation, to believe those principles as articles of their faith, which naturally undermine, ruin, and eat out the very heart of all monarchy. But if any one should plead favour for them, it is pity but these *bulls and decrees*, and the *Scotch covenant*, were all drawn into one system, that so they might be *indulged* all together, and perhaps in time they

I may.

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may. You have seen here their principles, (*i. e.*) you have heard the *text*; and you need go no farther than this fifth of *November* for a comment.

I could farther add, that the popish religion, in the nature of it, is inconsistent with the just rights, and supremacy of princes: and that upon this invincible Reason, that it exempts all *the clergy from subjection to them*, so far, that (be their crimes what they will) Kings cannot punish them. For the proof of which, I shall bring that, which is *instar omnium*, and which I am sure they must stand to; *viz.* the decree of the council of *Trent*, which in the 24th session about reformation, chap. 5. p. 412. determines thus. “*Causæ criminales majores*
“*contra episcopos ab ipso tantum summo ponti-*
“*fice Romano cognoscantur, & terminentur;*
“*minores verò in concilio tantum provinciali*
“*cognoscantur & terminentur.*” So that the King, for any thing that he has to do in these matters, may sit and blow his nails; for use them otherwise, he cannot. He may indeed be plotted against, have barrels of powder laid, and ponyards prepared for him: But to punish the sacred actors of these villanies, that is reserved only to him, who gave the first command for the doing them.

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These things, I say, I could prosecute much farther, but that I am equally engaged by the exigence of my subject, to speak something of their true seed, the sons of *Geneva* : who, though they seem to be contrary to those of *Rome*, and like *Sampson's* foxes, to look opposite ways ; yet when they are to play the incendiaries, to fire kingdoms and governments, they can *turn tail* to one and the same *firebrand*.

In our account of these, we will begin with the father of the faithful ; faithful, I mean, to their old antimonarchical doctrines and assertions ; and that is the great *Musti* of *Geneva* : Who in the *fourth book of his Institutions*, chap. 20. §. 31. has the face to own such doctrine to the world as this ; “ That it is not only not
“ unlawful for the three estates to oppose their
“ king in the exorbitances of his government,
“ (of which they still are to be judges) but
“ that they basely and perfidiously desert the
“ trust committed to them by God, if they
“ connive at him, and do not to their utmost
“ oppose and restrain him.”

Let us see this wholesome doctrine and institution farther amplified in his commentaries upon *Daniel*. Chap. 2. verse 29. He roundly tells us, “ that those men are out of their wits,
“ and quite void of sense and understanding,
“ who desire to live under sovereign monar-
“ chies :

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“ chies ; for that it cannot be (says he) but
“ order and policy must decay, where one
“ man holds such an extent of government.”

Upon this good foundation he proceeds farther, chap. 6. verse 22. “ Princes (says he)
“ when they oppose God, (and oppose God,
according to him, they do, when they re-
fuse his new discipline) “ then, says he, *ab-*
“ *dicant se potestate*, they deprive themselves
“ of all power ; and it is better in such cases,
“ to spit in their faces, than to obey them.”
Yet for all this, *Daniel*, who surely was as
godly a man as *Mr. Calvin*, did not spit in
Nebuchadnezzar's face.

But that we may know when princes op-
pose God, and so may bring his assertions to-
gether ; he tells us farther, chap. 5. ver. 25.
“ That kings forget that they are men, and of
“ the same mould with others : they are, says
“ he styled *Dei gratiâ* ; but to what sense or
“ purpose, save only to shew, that they ac-
“ knowledge no superior upon earth ? yet un-
“ der colour of this, they will trample upon
“ God with their feet ; so that it is but an ab-
“ use, when they are so called.” It seems
then, we must lay aside all appellations of
honour, and hereafter say only, *Good-man such*
an one, king of *England*, or *Laird such an one*,
king

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king of *Scotland*. But let us follow him a little farther; where in the same chapter we shall see him go on thus. "See, says he, what the rage and madness of all kings is, with whom it is a common thing to exclude God from the government of the world. Again, chap. 6. verse 25. *Darius* (says he) will condemn by his example all those, that profess themselves at this day, *catholick kings, christian kings, and defenders of the faith*; and yet do not only deface, and bury all true piety, and religion, but corrupt and deprave the whole worship of God."

Could any thing be with greater virulence thrown at all the princes of Christendom, than this? and yet I believe there is never a *puritan* or *dissenter* in *England*, but would lick his spittle in every one of these assertions.

But let us now rally them together into one argument. When princes oppose God, we are not (in *Calvin's* judgment) *to obey them, but to spit in their faces*. But now, *to exclude God from his government of the world, and to corrupt his whole worship* (which he affirms all princes do) *is surely to oppose God*: and therefore, according to his doctrine, joined with his good manners, *we are not to obey them, but spit in their faces*. A doctrine fit only to come from him, who nested himself into the chief power

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power of *Geneva* after the expulsion of the lawful prince.

In the last place, to speak one word of his epistles, which were published by *Beza*; one, who had been a long time lick'd by him into his own form; and so was likely to do him what advantage he could in their publication: he, who shall diligently read them, will find, that there was scarce any traitorous design on foot in Christendom, but there are some traces of correspondence with it extant in those epistles.

And so we dismiss him. *Beza* his disciple succeeds him both in place and doctrine; and to shew, that he does so, he expressly owns, and commends the *French rebellion*, in his epistle before his *annotations*. And in the forty *articles of Bearne*, published in the year 1574, and drawn up by *Beza*, in the fortieth article he affirms, "that they were bound not to disarm, so long as their religion was persecuted by the king."

It we would now see how this doctrine grew, being transplanted into *Scotland*; *Knox*, in his book to the nobility and people of *Scotland*, in the point of obedience to kings, instructs them thus: "Neither *promise*, says he, nor *oath*, can oblige any man to obey, or give assistance unto tyrants against God."

And,

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And, what tyrants were in his sense, his practices against the queen regent sufficiently shew.

In the next place, *Buchanan*, who was once prolocutor of the *Scotch* assembly, that is to say, something greater than their king, is copious upon this subject, in his history of *Scotland*, and in his book *de jure regni*, &c. In the former of which, at the 372d page, he wonders that there is not some publick reward appointed for those private men, that should kill tyrants, as there is for those that kill wolves. And in his book *de jure regni*, he maintains an excellent dispute against such as defend kings. The royal advocates, says he, hold, *that kings must be obeyed, good or bad*. It is blasphemy to affirm that, says *Buchanan*. But God placeth oftentimes evil kings, say the royal advocates; so doth he often private men to kill them, says *Buchanan*. But in *1 Tim.* we are commanded to pray for princes, say they; so are we commanded to pray for thieves, says he; but yet may hang them up, when we catch them. But say the royal advocates, *St. Paul strictly commands obedience to all princes*: *St. Paul* wrote so, says *Buchanan*, in the infancy of the church, when they were not able to resist them; but if he had lived now, he would have wrote otherwise.

Now,

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Now, if this be their prolocutor's doctrine, I leave it to any one to judge, whether every King has not cause to take up those words of *Jacob* to *Simeon* and *Levi*, with a little change; *O my soul, come not thou into their secret, and unto their general assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!*

But that we may come home to the very place of my text; I shall produce one more of them, and that is *Pareus*; a *German* divine, but fully cast into the *Geneva* mould. He in his comment upon *Romans* xiii. full fraught with a pestilent discourse against the sovereignty of kings, assigns several cases in which their subjects may lawfully take up arms against them, page 1338. As 1. "If their prince
"blasphemes God, or causes others to do so.
"2. If he does them some great injury: his
"words are, *si fiat ipsis atrox injuria*. 3. If
"they cannot otherwise enjoy their lives,
"estates, and consciences." Now with all these large conditions, still join this, that themselves are to be judges in all these cases against their prince; and then, if they have but a mind to rebel, they may blame themselves, if they are to seek for a lawful cause. This made King *James* award this worthy piece to the *fire* and the *hangman*. A prince, who though bred up under Puritans, yet hated
their

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their opinions heartily, because he understood them thoroughly.

And now last of all, as it is the nature of dregs, and the worst part of things, to descend to the bottom, it were easy to bring up the rear with our *English Genevizers*, and to shew, how these doctrines of disloyalty to princes have thriven amongst them; were it not impertinent to think, that you could be farther instructed by hearing that for an hour, that you have felt for twenty years. And here by the way, it is a glorious justification of the church of *England*, still to have had the same enemies with the monarchy of *England*. For an account of their tenets, I shall not send you to their papers, to their sermons, though some of the greatest blots to christianity, next to their authors; but I shall send you to *the field, to the high courts of justice*, where they stand writ to eternity in the massacre of thousands, in the blood and banishment of princes; actions, that much outdo the business of this present anniversary; but to be buried in silence, because not to be reprehended with safety.

However, as for Puritanism, since it had so long deceived the world with a demure face, I have been often prone to think, that it was in some respect a favour of providence, to let it have its late full scope, and range, to convince,

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convince, and undeceive Christendom, and by an immortal experiment to demonstrate, whether those principles tend, and what a savage monster, *Puritanism*, armed with power, would shew itself to the world.

So that if any christian prince should hereafter forget the *English* Rebellion, and himself, so far as to be deceived with those stale, threadbare baffled pretences of *Conscience*, and *Reformation*, he would fall in a great measure unpitied, as a martyr to his senseless fondness, and a sacrifice to his own credulity.

And for those amongst us, they are of that incorrigible, impregnable malice, that forgetting all their treasons, they have made the *King's oblivion* the chief subject of their own; and rewarding all his unparallel'd mercies with continual murmurs, libels, plots and conspiracies, seem only to be pardoned into fresh treasons, and *indemnify'd* into new rebellions.

We have seen here the adversaries, which this great duty of allegiance to kings has on both sides: Which that we may enforce against all arts of evasion, which the *Papist* and *Puritan*, the mortal, sworn *covenanted* enemies of all magistracy, but especially of monarchy can invent; it will be expedient briefly to discuss this question:

Whether, and how far, human laws bind the conscience? To

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To the determination of which, if we would proceed clearly, and rationally, we must first state, what it is to *bind the conscience*. To bind the conscience therefore, is so to oblige a man to the performance of a thing, that the non-performance of it, brings him under the guilt of sin, and liableness to punishment before God.

Now to proceed: Some are of opinion, that human laws oblige only to the penalty annex'd to the violation of them; and that the conscience contracts the guilt of no sin before God; a man's person being only subject to the outward penalties, which the civil magistrate shall inflict for the expiation of his offence.

But the confutation of this opinion, I need fetch no farther than from the text. For I demand of the most subtle Expositor, and acute Logician in the world, what sense he will make here of the words [*for conscience-sake*;] if by Conscience is not meant *Conscience of sin*, but only of liableness to punishment before the magistrate.

For then the sense of the words will be this: *You must needs be subject not only for wrath*, that is, for fear of punishment; *but also for conscience-sake*, that is, for fear of punishment too; since according to them, the term [*for conscience-sake*] referred to the laws of the civil

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civil magistrate, can signify no more. But this is so broad a depravation of the rules of speaking, that it banishes all sense and reason from the whole scheme and construction of the words.

To the whole matter therefore I answer by a distinction.

1. That a law may bind the Conscience, either *immediately*, by virtue of its own power, convey'd to it, by its immediate legislator. Or,

2. *Mediately*, in the strength of a superior law, owning and enforcing the obligation of the inferior.

This distinction premised : I affirm that the laws of man neither do, nor can thus immediately bind the conscience ; that is, by themselves, or by any obliging power transfused into them from the human legislator. That this is so, I demonstrate upon these reasons.

1. No power can oblige any farther, than it can take cognizance of the offence, and inflict penalties, in case the person obliged does not answer the obligation, but offends against it. This proposition stands firm upon this eternal truth ; that nothing can be an obligation, that is absurd and irrational. But it is absurd for any power to give laws, and obligations to that, of which it can take no account,

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count, nor possibly know, whether it keeps or transgresses those laws, and which, upon its transgression of them, it cannot punish.

But what man alive, what judge or justice, what *Minos*, or *Radamanthus*, can carry his inspection into the *Conscience*? What evidence, what witness, or rack, can extort a discovery of that, which the conscience is resolved to conceal, and keep within itself? Nay, admit that it were possible to force it to such confessions against itself; yet what penalty could human force, and the short reach of the secular arm, inflict upon a spiritual, immaterial substance? which defies all our engines of torment, and arts of cruelty; which laughs at the hostilities and weak invasions of all the elements. Conscience is neither scorch'd with the fire, nor prick'd with the sword; it feels nothing under a deity, nothing but the stings and insinuations of an angry, sin-revenging Omnipotence.

2. A second reason is this: That if human laws, considered in themselves, immediately bind the Conscience, then human laws, as such, carry in them as great an obligation as the divine. The consequence is most clear; for the divine law can do no more than bind the Conscience; the *nature* of man not being capable of coming under greater obligation.

But

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But now a law can have no more force or power in it, than what it receives from the legislator; and since the obliging force of it follows the proportion of his power and prerogative; to affirm that any sanction of man has the same binding force, and sacred validity, that the laws of God have, amounts to a blasphemous equaling of him, who is a worm, and a pitiful nothing, to him, who is God blessed for ever.

Let these arguments suffice to demonstrate, that human laws cannot of *themselves*, and by any power *naturally inherent* in them, immediately bind the conscience. But then in the next place, I add, that it is as certain, that every human law enjoining nothing sinful, or wicked, really binds the conscience, by virtue of a superior obligation superadded to it, from the injunction and express mandate of the divine law, which commands subjection to the laws and ordinances of the civil magistrate; whether of the king as supreme, or of such as be his vicegerents and deputed officers.

And thus to assert, that human laws have the same obligation with divine, is neither absurd, nor blasphemous; forasmuch as this is not affirmed to be by any prerogative immanent in themselves, but derivative, and bor-

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rowed from the divine. As it is not either treason, or impropriety to affirm, that the word of the constable obliges as much as the word of the King, when the King commands that his constable's word, in such or such matters, should be as much obeyed as his own.

Having thus therefore, by a due and impartial distribution, assigned to God the prerogative of God, and to *Cæsar* the prerogative that is *Cæsar's* ; and withal, pitch'd the obligation of human laws upon so firm, and so unshakable a basis ; we shall pass from the first ground, upon which obedience to the civil magistrate is enforced, namely, *Conscience of the unlawfulness of resisting it* ; and proceed to the

2. With which I shall conclude. And that is, *Conscience of the scandal* of such a resistance ; which surely is an argument to such, whose principles are not scandalous. How tender does *St. Paul*, in all his epistles shew himself of the repute of Christianity ; and what stress does he still lay upon this one consideration ?

1 *Thess.* iv. 12. *I beseech you, that ye walk honestly towards them that are without.* And in 2 *Cor.* vi. 3. *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed.* And surely, could we strip rebellion of the sin, yet this would be argument enough against it, that it gives the enemies of Christianity cause to blas-

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pheme, and with some shew of reason decry and reject that excellent profession.

How impossible had it been for the christian religion to have made such a spread in the world, at least ever to have gained any countenance from the civil power, had it owned such anti-magistratical assertions, either by its own avowed principles, or by the practices of its primitive professors?

And very probable it is, that at this very day the most potent enemy it has in the world, which is the *Mahometan*, takes up his detestation of it in a great measure, from his observance of those many *rebellions, wars, tumults and confusions*, that have so much, and so particularly infested *Christendom*.

For may he not naturally argue; Can that religion be true, or divine, that does not enforce obedience to the magistrate? Or can that do so, whose loudest professors are so rebellious? Is it not rational to imagine, that the religion men profess, will have a suitable influence upon their practice? Are not actions the genuine off-spring of principles? I wish that answer would satisfy the world, that *must* satisfy us, because we have no better; that *Christians* live below *Christianity*, and by their *lives* contradict their *profession*.

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In the mean time, let those incendiaries, those spiritual *Abaddons*, whose doctrine, like a scab, or leprosy, has overspread the face of Christianity; and whose tenets are red with the blood of Princes; let such, I say, consider, what account they will give to God for that scandal and prejudice, that they have brought upon so pure, and noble a religion, that can have no other blemish upon it in the world, but that such persons as they profess it.

If they had but any true ingenuity, (a principle much lower than that of grace) surely it would tie up their consciences from those infamous exorbitancies, that have given such deep gashes, such incurable wounds to their religion. For shall Christ have bled *once* for our sins, and shall christian religion *bleed* always by our practices? I could now beseech such by the mercies of God, and the bowels of Christ, did I think this would move those, who have torn in pieces the body of Christ; that they would bind up the broken reputation of Christianity, by shewing henceforth, that subjection is part of their religion: That they would reflect upon the desolations they have made, with one eye, and upon their great *exemplar* with the other; remembering him, who, while he conversed upon earth, was subject to the civil power in his own *person*,

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son, and commanded subjection to it by his precepts. So that what was said of Christ in respect of the *law of Moses*, may be equally said of him in reference to the *laws of the magistrate*, that he came not to destroy but to fulfil.

S E R M O N

Preached

WILLIAM STUBBS, on the
Twenty Ninth of May, 1672.

The Assembly Petitioned appointed by Act of
Parliament for the Happy Restoration
of King CHARLES II.

R 3

A

*Man's Inability to find out GOD's
Judgments.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

WESTMINSTER-ABBREY, on the
Twenty-Ninth of *May*, 1672.

B E I N G

The Anniversary Festival appointed by Act of
Parliament for the Happy RESTORATION
of King CHARLES II.

Man's Inability to find out God's
Judgments.

S E R M O N

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Westminster-Abbey, on the
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B E I N G

The Anniversary Festival appointed by Act of
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of King CHARLES II.

R

SERMON VI.

Man's Inability to find out
God's Judgments.

ROM. ii. 33. latter Part.

— *How unsearchable are his Ways,
and his Judgments past finding out.*

THAT, which first brought both a present guilt, and entailed a future curse upon mankind, was an inordinate *desire of knowledge*. And from the *fall of Adam*, to this very day, this fatal itch has stuck so close to our nature, that every one of his succeeding race is infinitely eager, inquisitive, and desirous to *know* and *judge*, where he is called only to *adore*, and to *obey*. By which we see, that it was this restless appetite of knowing,
which

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which made the earliest and boldest encroachment upon the divine prerogative ; setting man up not only as a *rebel*, but also as a *rival* to his maker ; and from behaving himself as his *creature*, encouraging him to become his *competitor*. For there appears not the least inducement to the breach of this command of God, from any pretence of the unreasonableness or difficulty of it, but merely because it was a *command* ; it obliged, and therefore was to be broken or shook off. So that upon the whole matter, it was not so much the taking beauties of the *forbidden tree*, as its *being forbidden*, which stirred the unruly humour, gave *relish* to the *fruit*, and *force* to the *temptation*. And could there be an higher and more direct defiance of the Almighty, under the peculiar character of Lord and Governor of the universe, than to have the very reason of his subjects *obedience* turned into an argument for his *rebellion* ? to see a pitiful short-sighted creature, prying into the reserves of heaven ; and one, who was but dust in his constitution, and of a day's standing at most, aspiring to an equality with his Creator in one of his divinest perfections ? All know, that even in human governments, there is hardly any one of them, but must have its *Arcana Imperii*, its hidden rules and maxims, which the subjects

of

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of it must by no means be acquainted with, but yield to their force, without examining their contrivance (the very ignorance of them being the chief cause that the generality are governed by them.) And if so, how much a more unpardonable *absurdity*, as well as insolence, must it needs be for those, who commonly stand at so great a distance, even from the little intrigues and mysteries of human policies, to say like their grand exemplar and counsellor Lucifer, *I will ascend and look into the secrets of the Most High*; rip up, and unravel all the designs and arts of providence in the government of the world; as if (forsooth) they were *of the cabinet to the Almighty*, were privy to all his decrees, and, in a word, held intelligence with *his Omniscience*. For no less than all this, was or could be imply'd in our first parents affecting *to be as Gods*; the main thing, which, by the advice *of the serpent*, they were then so set upon, and so furiously desirous of.

Whereas, on the contrary, that great repository of all truth and wisdom, *the Scripture*, is in nothing more full and frequent, than in representing the infinite transcendency of God's ways and actings above all created intellectuals. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me*, says David, Psal. cxxxviii. 6. *And thy*

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thy judgments are a great deep, Psal. xxxvi. 6. And *God has put darkness under his feet*, Psal. xviii. 9. And *his ways are in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known*, Psal. lxxvii. 19. In all which passages could any thing be expressed with more life and emphasis? For he, who treads upon the waters, leaves no *impression*; and he, who walks in the dark, falls under no *inspection*. There is still a *cloud*, a *thick cloud*, about God's greatest and most important works; and a *cloud* (we know) is both *high* and *dark*, it surpasses our reach, and determines our sight; we may look upon it, but it is impossible for us to look through it. In a word, if we consult either the reports of *Scripture*, or of our own *experience*, about the wonderful, amazing events of providence, especially in the setting up, or pulling down of kings and kingdoms, transplanting churches, destroying nations, and the like; we shall find the result of our closest reasonings, and most exact enquiries, concluding in an humble non-plus, and silent submission to the over-powering truth of this exclamation of our Apostle; *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

The glorious subject of this day's commemoration, is an eminent and bright instance
of

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of the methods of providence surpassing all human apprehension or conceit: and as it is a very great one itself, so was it brought forth by a numerous train of other providential passages altogether as great, whether we respect the quality of the actions themselves, or the strangeness of the effects. My business therefore shall be, from so notable a theme, to read men a lecture of humility; and that in a case, in which they seldom do (and yet have all the reason in the world to) shew it; to wit, in taking a due estimate of the proceedings of Almighty God, especially in his winding and turning about the great affairs of states and nations; and therein to demonstrate, what weak, purblind expositors we are of what is above us; how unfit to arraign and pass sentence upon that providence, that over-rules us in all our concerns; and in a word, to turn *interpreters*, where we understand not the *original*. It is, no doubt, an easy matter to gaze upon the surface and outside of things. But few, who see the hand of the clock or dial, can give a reason of its motion; nor can the case of the watch (though never so finely wrought) be any rule to judge of the artificial composure, and exact order, of the work within.

Now

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Now he, who would pass a clear, firm, and thorow judgment upon any action, must be able to give an account of these two things belonging to it; *viz.*

1. From what cause or reason it proceeds.
2. To what event or issue it tends.

In both which respects I shall demonstrate, that the sublimest and most advanced wisdom of man is an incompetent judge of the ways of God. And,

1. For the *reason* or *cause* of them. Men are so far from judging rightly of the passages of providence, that the causes they assign of them are for the most part *false*; but always *imperfect*.

And first, for *the false ones*; these (or some of them at least) are such, as follow.

1. That the prosperous and happy in this life are the proper objects of God's love; and the miserable and calamitous, of his hatred; a blessed doctrine doubtless, and exactly according to that of *Mahomet*, even the very marrow and spirit of the *Alcoran*, and the prime, and topping article, or rather sum-total of the *Ottoman* divinity. But such, we see, is the natural aptness of men to bring down God to their own measures, and to ascribe only those methods to him, which they first transcribe and copy from themselves. For they know well

well enough, how they treat one another, and that all the hostility of a man's actions pre-supposes and results from a much greater in his affections ; so that the hand is never lifted up to strike, but as it is commanded by the heart, that hates. And accordingly, let any notable calamity or distress befall any one, (and especially if maligned by us) and then how naturally do there start up, in the minds of such *Mahometan* christians, such reasonings as these : *Can so beneficent a being as God, be imagined to torment in love ? to kill with kindness ? or, does the noise of his blows, and the sounding of his bowels speak the same thing ?* no, by no means. And therefore when any one chances to be cut off by the stroke of some severe providence, no sooner has God done *execution*, but the malice of men presently passes sentence, and, by a preposterous proceeding, the man is first *executed*, and afterwards condemned, and so dies not for being a *criminal*, but passes for a *criminal* for being *put to death*.

Many remarkable instances of which have been in the late times of confusion ; in which, when a violent faction had, by perjury and rebellion, and success in both, rode triumphant over the best of kings, the loyallest of subjects, and the justest of causes that was ever fought for ; how then was the black decree of reprobation

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bation opened and let fly at them, both from pulpit and from press, and how were all the vials of wrath in the *Revelation* poured down upon their heads? Every mother's son of them was a reprobate, and a castaway, and none to hope for the least favour hereafter, who had not *Cromwell* or *Bradshaw* for his friend here. And as for the poor oppressed episcopal clergy of our church; I myself, in those blessed times, have heard one of their leading doctors, or rather *pulpit officers*, thus raving against them, in a sermon in the University: *See (says he) those of the late hierarchy (as they called themselves) how God for their uselessness has wholly laid them aside, with a design never to use them more.* But why never? Could the man of prophecy be sure of this, when the year sixteen hundred and sixty was then so near? or did God then so wonderfully restore the church and clergy for no other end, but to make no farther use of them for ever? or does he do miracles only to make sport for the world? But so full were these sons of arrogance and imposture of the prophetick spirit, (true or false it matter'd not, so long as it served a turn) that in time, with the help of a little more confidence, and less sense, (if possible) they might have set up for the writing almanacks, and even vied with their oracle *Lilly* himself in his famous predictions

tions of the glories of a deposed pitiful protector, not able to protect himself.

Nor were these enthusiasts less liberal in denouncing God's curses upon their enemies, than in engrossing his blessings to themselves. There being none of those reforming harpies, who, by plunders and sequestrations, had scraped together three or four thousand a year, but presently (according to the sanctified dialect of the times) they dubbed themselves God's peculiar people and inheritance; so sure did those thriving regicides make of heaven, and so fully reckon'd themselves in the high road thither, that they never so much as thought, that some of their saintships were to take *Tyburn* in their way.

Thus we see, how those saucy arbitrators upon, and dispensers of God's Judgments, took upon them to distribute life and death, election and reprobation, at their pleasure. And all this in direct contradiction to, or rather defiance of, the Spirit of God himself, (so impudently pretended to by these impostors all along;) who, as positively as words can express a thing, in *Eccles. ix. 1.* assures us, That *no man knows either love or hatred, by all that is before him;* nor consequently can conclude himself in favour, or out of favour with Almighty God, by any thing befalling him in this life; indeed,

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no more than he can read the future estate of his soul in the lines of his face, or the constitution of his body in the colour of his clothes. For should the quality of a man's condition here determine of the happiness or misery of it hereafter, no doubt *Lazarus* would have been in the flames, and the rich man in *Abraham's* bosom. But the next life will open us a very different scene from what we see in this, and shew us quite another face of things and persons from that which dazzles and deludes mens eyes at present; it being the signal and peculiar glory of the day of judgment, that it will be the great day of distinction, as well as retribution. But in the mean time, does not common experience undeniably convince us, that God sometimes curses men, even with prosperity, confounds them in the very answer of their prayers; and (as it were) choaks them with their own petitions? Does he not, as he did formerly to the *Israelites*, at the same time put flesh into their craving mouths, and send *leanneſs* withal into their *souls*? And is there any thing more usually practised in the world, than for men to careſs, compliment and feast their mortal enemies? persons, whom they equally *bate*, and are *bated by*? While on the other ſide, as a father chides, frowns upon and lashes the child, whom

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whom he dearly loves, (his bowels all the time yearning, while his hand is striking) so how common is it in the methods of divine love, for God to cast his *Jobs* upon dunghils; to banish into wildernesses, and so sell his most beloved *Josephs* into slavery and captivity; and, in a word, to discipline and fit him for himself by all, that is harsh and terrible to human nature? and still there is nothing but love and designs of mercy at the bottom of all this. *Thy rod and thy staff* (says *David*) *comfort me*, Psal. xxxiii. 4. that is, with his *staff* he *supports*, and with his *rod* he *corrects*, but still with both he *comforts*.

Now though I think it is sufficiently manifest to the impartial and judicious, that neither the sufferings of our prince, or his loyal subjects, were any arguments of God's hatred of them; yet, I hope, his Restoration was an effect of God's love to these poor harassed kingdoms; I say, I hope so: For our great ingratitude, sensuality, and raging impiety ever since our deliverance, makes me far from being confident, that what was in itself incomparably the greatest of earthly blessings, may not be made the fatal means to sink us lower, and damn us deeper, than any sins committed by us under the rod of the usurpers could have done. This is certain, that God may outwardly deliver us, and yet never love us: He may turn *our very table into a snare*. And I know no

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certain mark, or *criterion*, whereby we may infallibly conclude, that God did the glorious work, which we celebrate this day, out of love to us, but only this one, that we become holier and better by it than before. But if it should prove otherwise, will it not rank us with the harden'd and incorrigible, whose infidelity such miracles could not cure, and whose obstinacy such mercies could not melt down? And having upon both accounts done so much for us to so little purpose, resolve never to do more. And thus much for the first false cause, commonly assigned by confident and conceited men, of the dealings of God's providence, namely, *God's love or hatred of the persons*, upon whom they pass. But,

2. Another false cause, from which men derive the different proceedings of providence, is the *different merit* of the persons so differently treated by it: And from hence still supposing, that *the good only must prosper, and the bad suffer*; they accordingly from mens *prosperity* conclude *their innocence*, as from their *sufferings* *their guilt*. A most absurd assertion certainly: For if mens *happiness* and *misery* in *this world* (of which only we now speak) be measured out to them according to their *goodness* or *badness* respectively, how infinitely vain and senseless must that old and celebrated question,

Cur

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Cur bonis malè & malis benè, needs have been? when, according to the aforesaid doctrine, the very subject of this question is quite taken away, and a *man's happiness* as necessarily presupposes *his goodness*, and *his misery his sin or wickedness*, as in the natural course of things the *consequent* does and must the *antecedent*. And therefore so far has this opinion been from obtaining with the more sober and knowing part of mankind, that there has hardly been any age of the world, in which the said question has not exercised the minds of some of the wisest and best men in it; and that to such a degree, that it has proved a constant stumbling-block to most, and of all temptations to infidelity the strongest and most hard-ly conquered. For it was this, which so staggered *David* himself, that he confesses, that *his feet had well nigh slipped*, Psal. lxxiii. 2. And so confounded the prophet *Jeremiah*, Jer. xii. 1. that he could almost have offered to dispute the point with God himself; so utterly puzzled and distracted were these great men, till religion came in to their aid, and unriddled, what philosophy could not *solve*; and faith cut *afunder*, what reason could not *untie*. And from the same topick it was, that *Job's* friends argued; and that with such assurance, that one would have thought, that they took

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all that they said for demonstration ; but how falsely and rashly they did so, appears from the verdict passed by God himself upon the whole matter, both rejecting their persons, and condemning their reasonings, by a severe remark upon the presumption of the one, and the inconsequence of the other. For where the rule is crooked, how can the line drawn by it be strait ? It is most true, that there is no man, (our blessed Saviour only excepted) who either does, or ever did suffer, but was more or less a sinner, before he was a sufferer : And consequently, that there is ground enough in every man, to make God's infliction of the greatest evil upon him *just* ; and yet I affirm, that a man's *sin* is not always the *reason* of his *sufferings*, though sinfulness be still the *qualification* of his *person* : But the reason of those must be fetched from some other cause. For the better understanding of which, we must observe, that God may, and sometimes actually does, deal with men under a double capacity or relation, *viz.* 1. as an absolute Lord ; and 2. as a Judge or Governor. The rule, which he proceeds by as an absolute Lord, is his sovereign will and pleasure ; and the rule which he acts by as a Judge, is his justice and his law. Now, though under the
former

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former notion God does not properly exercise or exert his justice, yet he cannot therefore be said to do any thing *unjustly* ; it being one thing for God barely not to exercise an attribute in such or such a particular action, and another to oppose, or do any thing contrary to the said attribute. The former of which is usual, and fairly agreeable with the old œconomy of his attributes, but the latter is impossible.

Accordingly in the various dispensations befalling the sons of men, we find, how naturally prone the world has been all along, to state the different usages of mens persons upon the difference of their deserts. As when *Pilate* mingled the *Galileans* blood with their sacrifices, there were enough ready to conclude *those poor Galileans sinners above all other Galileans, for their suffering such things* ; but our Saviour quickly reverses the sentence, and assures them, that the consequence was by no means good, *Luke xiii. 1, 2.* And on the other hand, the *Israelites*, from the many miraculous works done for them, and blessings heaped upon them by the divine bounty, concluded themselves holier and more righteous than all the nations about them ; but we find both *Moses* in *Deut. ix.* and the Psalmist in *Psal. lxxviii.* roundly telling them, that there

was no such thing, but that they were a rebellious, ungrateful, stiff-necked people from the very first: and for aught appears from history to the contrary, have continued so ever since. And to proceed farther, did not the righteous providence of God bring down most of the potentates of the eastern world under the feet of that monster of tyranny and idolatry, *Nebuchadnezzar*; and that while he was actually reigning in his sins, with as high an hand, as he did or could do over any of those poor kingdoms, who had been conquered or enslaved by him? So that in the *Song of the three Children*, (as it is called) then the objects of his brutish fury; *Azarias* emphatically complains, that God had not only deserted his people, but delivered them into the hands of *the most unjust and wicked king in all the world*. These were the words, ver. 9. and this the character of that *Flagellum Dei*, that scourge of nations, notable for nothing great or extraordinary recorded of him, but *sin and success*. In like manner, did not the same providence make most of the crowns and scepters of the earth bend to the * *Roman* yoke? The greatness of which empire was certainly founded upon as much injustice, rapine and violence, as could well be practised by men; though still

* See Dr. *Arthur Duck's* Eook *de usu et autoritate juris civilis Romanorum*.

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still couched and carried on under the highest pretence of justice and honour (set off with the greatest shew of gravity besides) even while the said pretences, in the sight of the whole world, were impudently out-faced by the quite contrary practices; as appears in particular from that scandalous case of the *Mamertines*, and the assistance they gave those thieves and murderers, against all the laws of nations and humanity itself, only to serve a present interest against the *Carthaginians*. And lastly, what a torrent of success attended the *Turks*, till they had over-run most of the earth, and the whole *Greek* church and empire? And yet the notorious governing qualities, which these Barbarians acted, and grew up by, both in war and peace, were the height of *cruelty and treachery*; qualities of all other the most abhorred by God and man, and such as we may be sure could never induce God to abandon so great a part of Christendom (which yet in his judgment he has actually done) to so base a people, and so false a religion. And now, notwithstanding such flagrant examples of thriving impiety, carrying all before it, we see, how apt the world is still to make providence steer by man's merit. And as we have given instances of this in *nations*, so we want not the like in particular *persons*; amongst which,

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which, we have not a more remarkable exemplification of the case now before us, than in the person of St. *Paul*, and the judgments the *Barbarians* passed upon them, *Acts* xxviii. 4, 5, 6. For as soon as they saw the viper fastening upon his hand, they pronounced him a *murderer*; and presently again, as soon as he shook it off, and felt no hurt, they looked upon him as a *God*; that is, in a minute's time, from one not *worthy to live*, (as they had said) they advanced him to the condition of one not *able to die*. Thus we see, how they declared their judgment of both these passages, and of one no doubt as wisely as the other. In like manner, is a man brought under any signal and unusual calamity? Why then to the question: Was it his own personal guilt, or that of his family, which consigned him over to it? Or, in other words, *Did the man himself sin, or his parents*, that he was plundered, sequestered, imprisoned, and at length sworn out of his estate and life? Much the like question, we know, was proposed to our Saviour himself, in *John* ix. 2, 3. and that upon the account of as great a misery befallen a man, as could be well incident to human nature. And the answer he gave it (stating the whole reason of the evil *suffered*, upon the sole will of the inflicter without the least

least regard to any gift in the sufferer) stands upon record as an everlasting reprimand to all such queries and reflexions. So that should providence at any time strip a man of his estate, his honour, or high place, must this presently stamp him a reprobate, or castaway; or rather, according to the divine philosophy of our Saviour's forementioned answer teach us, that God who perfectly knew the temper and circumstances of the man, knew also, that a mean, and a low condition would place him nearer to him (as much a paradox as it may seem) than the highest and most magnificent. Another man perhaps is snatch'd away by a sudden, or untimely, a disastrous, or ignominious death; but must I therefore pass sentence upon him out of *Daniel*, or the *Revelations*, or charge him with some secret guilt, as the cause of it: as if a fever, or an apoplexy were not sufficient, without the concurring plague and poison of a malicious tongue, to send a man packing out of this world; or, as if any death could be so violent, or distemper so mortal and malign, but that it may, and does carry some into a better world, as well as others into a worse? But be the course of providence never so unaccountable, and contrary to my notions, ought I to descant upon any act of it, while I am wholly ignorant of
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the purpose, which directed it? Or shall I confess the ways of God to be *unsearchable and past finding out*, and at the same time attempt to give a reason of them, and so to the arrogance join the contradictions? Such methods certainly are equally senseless, and irreligious.

But of all the examples producible of impudent and perverse judging, there can hardly be any one parallel to what passed upon the sufferings of the late King of blessed and glorious memory, King *Charles I.* whose genealogies of *family-guilt*, besides *personal*, have been charged upon his royal head; as if he had come not only to the *throne*, but also to the *block* by *inheritance*. But as that excellent Prince was an eminent instance of the censorious venom of mens tongues in matters of this nature, so we need go no farther for a proof of the falseness and fallaciousness of this rule of judging, than to the same royal martyr; for was there ever any Prince more unfortunate, and yet ever any more virtuous? Who could have imagined, that so much true piety, so much innocence, so much justice and tenderness of his subjects lives and properties, so much temperance and restraint of himself in all the affluence and prosperities of a long-flourishing court, so much patience and submission to the hand of God in his sharpest

adversities, and, in a word, such an union of all moral perfections, as scarce ever met in any Prince, (or indeed in any mere man but himself;) who, I say, that should measure out mens fortunes by their merit, could have imagined, that all these heights of virtue and christianity should only prepare the princely owner of them to fall a sacrifice to the evil of his enemies, in the most cruel, barbarous and savage manner, that perhaps any crowned head ever fell before? And will any one after this pretend to give an account of the proceedings of providence from the guilt or innocence of persons, when King *Charles I.* was imprison'd, spit upon, arraigned, and cut off by an infamous sentence, as a *tyrant, traitor, murderer* and *publick enemy*, before the gates of his own palace? And that miscreant, who was the prime actor in all this woful tragedy (a piece of dirt soaked in blood, as it was said of *Nero* with much less cause) should usurp the sceptre, and invade the throne of his royal master, reign successfully, and die in peace? if he could be said to die in peace, who lived in perpetual war with his own conscience; the only enemy, which would never make peace with him, whatsoever his dastardly, mean-spirited neighbours did.

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Histories inform us of many worthy and brave persons brought to unworthy ends ; any one of which were enough to rebuke the proneness of the world to judge of the causes of God's dealing with men from any qualifications in the persons so dealt with. But certainly if we consider the peculiar strangeness of the forementioned case, with the appendage of all its circumstances, so long as the memory of King *Charles I.* lasts, (as I hope it will not only last, but flourish also, to the world's end) it will be impossible for us to be convinced by an higher argument, or a more amazing matter of fact, *that God's judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out.* And therefore till our bold magisterial dispensers of God's judgments can give us a satisfactory account of the foregoing particulars, from some clear and undoubted principle of reason or revelation ; let them stand off and adore in silence, without presuming to *judge*, and much less to *condemn*, having, as 'tis manifest, no more *ability* for the one, than *authority* for the other. And thus as we have given proof more than enough of mens utter unfitness to sound the depths of God's providential dealings with them upon this account, *that they usually ascribe them to false causes ;* so in the

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Third place, the same will appear yet farther from this; *that they always resolve them into imperfect causes.* Who would assign an adequate reason of any thing, which God does, must see as far into it, as God sees. And there is scarce any extraordinary passage of providence, which does not point at least a thousand years forward, and stretch itself more than a thousand miles about; so that a man must be able to take into his mind all that long train and wide compass of purposes, to which it may subserve, and all those influences, which it may cast upon things vastly remote in place, and distant many ages in time; which it is impossible for any created intellect to have a clear prospect into, or comprehension of. There is no action of God, but there is a combination of impulsive causes concerned in it; one or two of which possibly the wit of man may sometimes light upon, but the shortness or weakness of his discerning powers keeps him inevitably a stranger to far the greater part of them. God, by one and the same numerical lot of providence, may intend to punish one nation, to advance another; to plant the gospel in a third, and to let in trade into a fourth; likewise to make way for the happiness of one man's posterity, and for the extinction and razing out of another's; to reward the virtues
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of a sober and industrious people, and to revenge the * crimes of a slothful and a vicious, a perjured and rebellious, with innumerable other designs, which God may actually propose to himself in every single passage of his transactions with men; and which we are no more fit or able to search into, or arbitrate upon, than we are to govern the world.

And thus much for the first general argument, proving the insufficiency of any human wisdom to interpret the actions of providence, taken from its inability, truly and thoroughly to pierce into the reasons of them; which as it must always make one considerable ingredient in passing a right judgment upon any action, so I shew, that there was another also required, namely, *a certain prospect into the utmost issue or event of the same*. Upon which account also man's unfitness to judge of the proceedings of providence shall be now made out to us, by considering those false rules and grounds, by which men generally fore-judge of the issue and event of actions: as,

1. Men usually prognosticate the event of any thing, or action, according *to the measure of the prudence, wisdom and policy of second agents immediately engaged in it*. And it must be confessed, that it is the best and likeliest

rule

* No nation certainly, at this time, farther in debt to God's justice, than the *English*.

rule, that they have to judge by, were it not controlled by two better and likelier, and from which there can lie no appeal, *viz. scripture and experience*. The former of which brings in God laughing at the wisdom of the wise; taking and circumventing the crafty in their own wiles. Job v. 12, 13. baffling the subtle and shrewd advices of *Balaam* and *Achitophel*, and so stifling both counsel and counsellor in a noose of his own making. And for the latter, history so abounds with instances of the most refined customs, and artificially-spun contrivances, dashed in pieces by some sudden and unforeseen accidents, that to ascertain the event of the most promising undertaking, if we trust but our own eyes, we shall have little cause to trust to another's wisdom.

2. Men usually prognosticate the success of any project or design, from *success formerly gained under the same, or less probable circumstances*. And the argument seems to proceed *a majore ad minus*; as that, if a man could conquer and break through a greater difficulty, much more may he presume, that he shall be able to master and evade through a less. And perhaps the ratiocination, according to the bare natural consequences of things, is true and good. Nevertheless it is manifest, that men frequently miscarry in the application of it;

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and several reasons may be given for their doing so. As, 1. It is hard and perhaps scarce possible (whatsoever less observing minds may imagine to the contrary) to repeat and exemplify any action, under perfectly the same circumstances. 2. That in most actions there are still some circumstances not observed or taken notice of, which may have a surer and more immediate influence upon the event of those actions, than those circumstances, which, coming more into view, are more depended upon. But, 3. And chiefly, because the success of every action depends more upon the secret hand of God, than upon any causes or instruments visibly engaged in it. Take an instance or two of this. It was easy and natural enough to conclude, that *Hannibal* having so worsted the *Roman* armies, while they were in their fresh strengths, and full number, should have been much abler to crush the same enemy under all those disadvantages, which such great and frequent defeats must needs have brought upon them. And yet we find *Fabius* and *Marcellus*, after some time, wonderfully turning the stream of his conquests, and *Scipio*, at length, totally subduing him. In like manner, if a nation under an usurp'd government, disunited in itself, and in continual danger of commotions at home, as well

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as of enemies from abroad, was yet an overmatch to its neighbour-nation in a war against it; it seems rational and probable enough to infer from thence, that the same nation, settled under an unquestionably legal government, and free from any disturbances within itself, should be much more likely (especially under the same conduct) to cope with and subdue the same enemy. And yet we find, that the premisses taken up from our naval successes in the years 1652, and 1653, produced but a poor conclusion in our contest with the same adversary, in the years 1666, and 1667; when we were so shamefully insulted upon our coasts, and our noblest ships fired in our harbours. And the cause of this seems not so much derivable from any failure either of the *English* courage or conduct *at sea*, as from the secret judgments of God, (much the *greater deep of the two*.) So that it is clear, that this rule also, of gathering the future success of actions, is weak and fallacious: and that in some sorts of events, after things have been contrived and put together with the utmost exactness, a link or two of the chain happening to break, the coherence of the whole is hereby dissolved; and then, how fairly soever the *antecedent* may have promised us, we shall yet in the close of all find ourselves lurch'd of the *consequent*.

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3. Men generally *measure the issue and success of any enterprize, according to the preparations made for it, and the power employed in it*; it being a rule of judging, which the world cannot be beaten off from, that *ten thousand must needs chase a thousand, and a thousand put an hundred to flight*. Victory, on much the stronger side, seems still to be foreseen and foretold as certainly, as a *necessary effect* in the *bowels of its cause*. And yet, we shall find, that it is not always the bigger *weight*, but sometimes the *artificial hand* holding and managing the *balance*, which turns the *scale*. And in like manner, when we have raised armies, and mann'd our fleets, are we not still in the hand of Providence? In that hand, which sometimes sets the crown of victory upon the weak and the few, and disappoints the hopes, and breaks the force of the confident and numerous. Could any take up surer and better-grounded presages of victory, from a survey of his own stupendous power, than *Xerxes* might, when he came to *fetter the Hellespont*, and to swallow up the (comparatively) despicable strength of the *Athenians*? Or could any thing look more invincible, than the *Spanish Armada* sent against the *English* navy? But for all this, we find that there is no commanding the sea, without being able to command the winds too:

and he who cannot do this, let him not pretend to the other. What a poor thing is preparation to be trusted to, in opposition to accident? And what a pitiful defence is *multitude* on the one side, where *omnipotence* takes the other? If we read and believe scripture, we shall find *Gideon* with his three hundred men, armed with lamps and pitchers, routing and destroying the vast and innumerable host of the *Midianites*: and can any rational man be confident of the greatest forces which human power can raise, if he believes that the same God, who did that, is still in being, and still as able to do the same things as ever? Nay, should we take an exact survey of all passages in history to this purpose; such a pleasure does Providence seem to take in defeating the counsels of confident and presuming men, that perhaps in the greatest battles which were ever fought, we shall find as many victories obtained by a less number over a greater, as by a greater over a less: and what then must become of the commonly received rules? But to keep nearer home, and to the day too, if human force and preparation could have determined the event of things, and Providence had proceeded by the same measures which men judge, the business of this day, I am sure, had been desperate, and as impossible in the event

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as it was once in the opinion and discourse of some, who having done their utmost to prevent it, had the good luck to get too much by it, when it came to pass. For were not the usurpers, just before the king's restoration, as strong as ever? Did they not sit lording it in the head of victorious fleets and armies, with their feet upon the neck of three conquered enslaved kingdoms? And striking such an awe and terror into all about them, that the boldest of their adversaries durst not so much as stir or open their mouths either against their persons or proceedings? And now in this state of things, who would have imagined, that any one could have entred into *the strong man's house, and have bound him, but one who had been much stronger?* Or that any thing could have recovered the lost sceptre, but a triumphant sword? Or that the crown being once *fought off* from the royal owner's head, could have ever returned to it, but by being *fought on again?* These and no other methods of restoring the king did either his friends or his enemies think of; but so infinitely unlikely and unfeasible were they, that his enemies feared them as little, as his friends had grounds to hope for them.

When, behold! on a sudden, and in the height of all their pride, policy, and power,

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Providence gives them a turn, and they see the whole web, which with so much pains, cost and cunning, they had been so long a weaving, unravelled before their eyes in a moment, and themselves clear off the stage, without having settled any one of those innovations either in church or state, which they had been *swearing and lying, whining and praying, plundering and fighting, and cutting throats for (all in the Lord) for near twenty years together*; but instead thereof, the ancient government restored, and happily set upon its former bottom (could it have kept itself there;) and all this (to phrase it in the words * of a late historian) so easily, and with so little noise, that the wresting of that usurped power out of their hands cost not so much as a broken head or a bloody nose; for the getting of which they had wasted so many millions of treasure, and more than *one hundred thousand lives*, not to mention the *loss of souls*; by such unlikely and unforeseeable ways does Providence sometimes bring about its great designs in opposition to the shrewdest conjectures and contrivances of men. And thus much for the other general argument, proving the inability of any human wisdom, to comprehend the designs of Providence, taken from those false rates and

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grounds,

* Dr. Peter Heylin.

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grounds, by which men generally fore-judge of the issue or event of actions.

And now for the use and improvement of what has been discoursed by us hitherto, we may, from the foregoing particulars, infer these three things.

1. The extreme folly and vanity of making the future event, or presumed success of any enterprize, the rule of our present actings about the same. A rule, as such, should be a thing both certain in itself, and certainly known to be so. But there is no future contingent, which we promise ourselves, though under the greatest probability of event imaginable, but is still a thing in itself uncertain; and consequently, being capable of failing us in the issue, can be no rational certain rule to guide us for the present. And moreover, as a rule in any human action whatsoever ought to be (as we have here shewn) both certain and certainly known to be such, upon the stock of bare prudence and reason; so ought it likewise to be lawful, or morally good upon the accounts of conscience and religion; and therefore nothing contrary to the same ought to be admitted as a rule for men to act by, whether in a private or a publick capacity. In a word, conscience, duly steering by principles of morality and religion, is the sole assured director of

of all human actions or designs. So that when any political sinister consideration would draw men off from a present confessed duty, upon presumption or supposal of some future advantage (to ensue thereby for the service of some great interest civil or religious) still that advantage is but presumed or supposed, and so not always sure to follow the illegal *actions*; but the *guilt* of it always does. And of this we have a remarkable, but sad instance, in the late royal martyr, who had but one thing lay heavy upon his conscience in all his sufferings, and which he always lamented even to his dying day, namely, the *death of the great Earl of Strafford*. And we may easily imagine the tumults and struggles in his princely breast, when it was assaulted on both sides about that unhappy action. On the one hand, his conscience urged to him the unlawfulness of condemning a person, of whose innocence he always declared himself so fully satisfy'd. On the other, the stream of the popular fury beat high and fierce upon the throne itself, and seemed to threaten all, if he did not sacrifice that great minister. Now here was a *present*, *certain* duty on the one side, persuading him not to violate his conscience; and a supposed future advantage on the other, to wit, his own and his kingdom's security, which induced

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duced him to baulk his conscience for that person. And we know, what course he took; but did it answer his expectations? Did it abate the popular rage at all? or did it secure either his own or his kingdom's peace? Nay, on the contrary, did not the cutting down of that great bank let in a torrent, which overwhelmed and carried all before it? Nothing being indeed more usual, than for such as venture to displease God, only that they may gratify and please men, in the issue to have God their enemy and man too. And therefore that worthy * prelate, who in the face of all this danger still plyed the king with this counsel; *Sir, you know the judgment of your own conscience, I beseech you follow that, and trust God with the rest*; gave him an advice not more becoming the piety of a bishop, than the wisdom of a privy-counsellor; and so deep and lasting an impression did it leave upon his royal and *truly tender conscience*, that in his last meditations upon this sad subject he observes, *That he only, who of all his counsellors* advised him to adhere to his conscience against the popular rage, was the person, who was the least harassed and pursued by that popular rage, when it was at its greatest height of power and tyranny. To which we may add

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* Bishop *Fuxon*, then bishop of *London*, and privy-counsellor.

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and wise bishop, that he survived all that tyranny and oppression ; and, after he had so fully and worthily served the father, lived to attain to the highest dignity in this church ; and, as the complement of all, to set the crown upon the head of his miraculously restored Son. And may that Providence, that governs the world, always signalize such peculiar *merits* with such *peculiar rewards*. But,

2. We gather also from the foregoing discourse, *the absolute necessity of an entire, total, unreserved dependence upon Providence, in the most hopeful and promising condition of our affairs*. The natural cause or ground of all dependence, is mens consciousness to themselves of their own ignorance or weakness, compared with the sufficiency of others, whereby they expect their relief from others, which they find they cannot have from themselves. This I conceive is the true account and philosophy of this matter. And we have already sufficiently demonstrated man's utter inability, either to understand the *reasons*, or to controul the *issues* of Providence ; so that in all the passages of it, an *implicit faith* in God's wisdom is man's greatest *knowledge*, and a dependence upon his power, his *surest strength*. For when all the faculties of man's body and mind have done their utmost, still the
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the success of all is at the mercy of Providence; the ways of which are intricate and various; the grounds upon which it proceeds, *unintelligible*; and the ends it drives at, *unsearchable*. But, in a word, to make our reliance upon Providence both pious and rational, we should in every great enterprize we take in hand, prepare all things with that care, diligence, and activity, as if there was no such thing as Providence for us to depend upon; and again, when we have done all this, we should as wholly and humbly depend upon it, as if we had made no such preparations at all. And this is a rule of practice, which will never fail or shame any, who shall venture all that they *have*, or *are*, upon it: For as a man, by exerting his utmost force in any action or business, has all, that an human strength can do for him therein; so in the next place, by quitting his confidence in the same, and placing it only in God, he is sure also of all, that Omnipotence can do in his behalf. It's enough, that God has put a man's actions into his own power; but the success of them, I am sure, he has not. And therefore all trust in man, about things not within the power of man, (according to the account of heaven) is virtually a distrust of God: For let but our trust in him be measured out by our *whole heart*,

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heart, soul, and strength, (the only measure of it which the Scripture knows) and we shall find but a poor overplus to bestow upon any thing besides. But,

3. And lastly, as we have from the premised particulars evinced the necessity of a dependence upon Providence, so from the same we may learn the impossibility of a rational dependence upon it, with any comfort, but in the way of lawful, honest and religious courses. This is certain, that in all our undertakings, God will be either our friend or our enemy. For Providence never stands neuter; and if so, is it not a sad thing for a man to make a mighty potentate his enemy, and then to put himself under his protection? And yet this is directly the case of every presuming sinner, and these the terms upon which he stands with almighty God. But can that man, with any confidence, rest himself upon God's power, whose conscience shall in the mean time proclaim him a traitor to his laws? Or can any people, nation, or government whatsoever, in the doubtful engagements of war, cast itself upon God's *mercy*, while by its crying sins of prophaneness, atheism, and irreligion, (or, which is worse, *a countenance of all religions*) it knows itself so deeply in arrears to his *justice*? No man persisting in any known wicked course

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course can rationally hope, that God should succeed or prosper him, in any thing that he goes about ; and if success should chance to accompany him in it, it is a thousand to one, but it is intended him only as a curse, as the very greatest of curses, and the readiest way, by hardening him in his sin, to ascertain his destruction. He, who will venture his life in a *duel*, should not *choose to have* his mortal enemy for his second.

On the contrary, the same *innocence*, which makes all quiet *within* a man, makes all peaceable and serene *above* him. And that person cannot but have a certain boldness, and a kind of claim to the favours of Providence, whose heart is continually telling him, *that he does, as he should do* ; and that his conscience having been all along his *director*, cannot, in the issue, prove his *accuser*. But that all things, whether he looks forwards or backwards, upon what is past or what is to come, shall concur in assuring him, that his great judge has no other sentence to pass upon him, but to set a crown of glory upon his head, and receive him with an *Euge ! bone serve !* Enter *thou into the joy of thy Lord*. And if, being thus inspired and anointed with such supporting expectations, he should yet chance utterly to sink, as to all his concerns and interests here below,

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below, yet having thus broke through them all to discharge his duty, the very sense of his having done so shall strengthen his heart, and bear up his spirits, though the whole world were in arms against him, or in a flame about him ; so that he shall be able, from his own experience, to seal to the truth of that seeming paradox of the Apostle in *Rom. viii. 36, 37.* that persons, thus assisted from above, even in *tribulations, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness*, (the known badges of primitive Christianity) nay, in *their being killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter*, shall yet, under these very massacres, *become more than conquerors*, through that God who makes those, who fight under his banners, triumph more gloriously in *losing their blood* for him, than their mightiest and most insulting enemies do or can in their *shedding of it*. For if a man falls a sacrifice to God, *his conscience*, or *his country*, it is not material by what hand he falls : God accepts the *martyr*, whosoever is the *executioner*. And so long as there is another world to *reward* and *punish*, no man's doom can be certainly pronounced from any thing *that befalls him in this*.

And now at length, to come to a close of what we have been hitherto discoursing of, we
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have shewn the darkness and intricacy of the ways of Providence; and we have shewn also, what *incompetent judges*, and yet *what confident interpreters* men are generally of them; from all which what can so naturally result, and so justly be inferred, as the severest reprimands of the *blindness* and *boldness* (qualities seldom found asunder) of the saucy descants of the world concerning these matters? For what do they else, but in effect, arraign even Providence itself? summon Omniscience before the bar of ignorance? and in a word, put a pitiful mortal to sit in judgment upon his maker? The text, I am sure, positively declares; that the works of God are *past finding out*; and if so, is it not the height of absurdity, as well as arrogance, to presume, either from *divinity* or *philosophy*, to assign any other reason of the works themselves, but the sole will of the agent? or to pretend to give an account of that which we ourselves own to be unaccountable? Common sense certainly must needs see, and explode the grossness of the *contradiction*; and convince us, that in things so transcendently above our highest and most raised speculations, the only rational and safe rule for us to proceed by, will be to make them rather matter of *admiration* than of *argument*, still remembring that, next to a direct

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rect violation of God's *reveal'd* will, is a bold intrusion into his *secret*.

Now to the infinitely wise Governor of all things, adorable in his counsels and stupendous in his works, but essentially just and holy in both, be rendred and ascribed (as it is most due) all praise, might, majesty and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.

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*Enthusiasts, not led by the Spirit
of God.*

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On *Rom. VIII. 14.*

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SERMON VII.

Enthusiasts, not led by the Spirit
of God.

DISCOURSE I.

ROM. viii. 14.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit
of God, are the Sons of God.*

THERE is that known averfeness in the nature of man (as it now stands) to all acts of virtue (especially such as are of an higher strain) and withal that deplorable impotence and inability to go through with them whensoever it undertakes them, that not only in the christian, but also in all other religions, men have found it necessary, in every great

action, to engage some other agent and principle, besides the man himself. So that amongst the heathens, who acknowledged a plurality of gods, you will hardly find any noble or heroick atchievement done by any of them, but you will find some one or other of their gods made a coadjutor in the case. Thus *Homer* brings in *Diomedes* and *Ulysses*, assisted by *Mars* and *Pallas*, (one notable for acts of valour, and the other for those of counsel and wisdom) and the like is said of many others. All which was but a kind of tacit acknowledgment of that weakness and decay upon man's nature, which has been ever since the fall. For they found (it seems) within themselves an experience of the thing itself, though they could give no account of its cause. And accordingly, being ignorant of the source of the malady, it could not be expected but that they should be as much out in the remedies they applied for relief against it. Only thus much is deducible from the whole matter, that they clearly saw themselves concerned to do many worthy things, which they found themselves wholly unable to do, without the help of divine power, or at least some power much superior to their own.

Now what these ignorant heathens blundered about, touching this great debilitation of

of human nature to great and good actions, (a thing owned and agreed to by the common experience of the most considering part of mankind) having been first taught the world (though more obscurely) by *Moses*, has been since more fully and clearly declared to the christian church (and that above all *Pelagian* or *Socinian* opposition whatsoever) by our blessed Saviour himself. For as the books of *Moses*, and of the prophets, do assure us, that man was at the first created perfect in all his faculties, and strong in his inclinations to good; and that by the fall of our first parents, the entireness of these perfections was lost both to themselves and to their posterity; so the Gospel (*like a tabula post naufragium*) informs us, that the great design of the Redeemer of the world was to repair these sad breaches made upon man's nature, (so far as it was necessary to the grand purposes of man's salvation;) and that to effect this, (amongst other things which he purchased of his father by his meritorious death) he procured the assistance and abode of his spirit to be in us, as it is in *John* xiv. 17. and to dwell in us, *Rom.* viii. 9. and to help our infirmities, as in *Rom.* viii. 26. and in a word, to lead us into all truth, in *John* xvi. 13. and so to be (as it were) an universal assisting genius more or less to all mankind.

It

It being clear therefore, from these and the like places of Scripture, that the Spirit of God, in some degree, leads and helps all men, tho' more eminently and peculiarly some: I shall cast the prosecution of the words under these four heads. As,

1. I shall shew, how the Spirit is said to be in men.

2. I shall shew, how men are led by the Spirit.

3. I shall shew, what is here meant by being the sons of God.

4. And lastly, I shall gather some conclusions by way of use and information from the whole. And first,

1. For the first of these; the Spirit may be said to be in men two ways.

1. Substantially, as he is God filling all things; and by reason of the infinity, and indivisibility of his nature, being wholly every where, and in every thing. For his nature being infinite, he can be excluded from no place or thing whatsoever; and being also indivisible, wheresoever he is, he is and must be totally. Forasmuch as his simplicity and indivisibility render him without parts or quantity; the only things that make a being so present to a place by one of its parts, as not to be present to the same place at the same time by another.

another. And according to this sense, the Spirit of God is equally in all men, and indeed in all things, and that essentially and necessarily by the omnipresence and unlimited expansion of his divine nature. And therefore this cannot be the thing we are now enquiring after.

2. The Spirit may be said to be in men in respect of the effects he produces in them: And thus God is said to be in heaven, and sometimes in one place more than in another; because of some notable operation, which he exerts in that place and not in another. In like manner the *Spirit of God is said to be in that man*, whom, by an immediate impulse or motion, he causes to do a thing; or in whom he creates those habits or dispositions to action, by which he is enabled to act with more proneness and facility one way than another; and that, whether those habits relate to the matters of *morality*, as those graces of the Spirit, with which the hearts of believers are sanctify'd, certainly do; or whether they refer only to matters of a civil import, as the arts of working infused into *Bezalel* and *Aholiab*, or of governing infused into *Saul*; or of wisdom into *Solomon*; all of them, no doubt, wrought and produced in those persons by the *Spirit of God*.

These,

These, I say, are the two allowed ways, by which the *Spirit or Holy Ghost* may be said to be in men; and besides these two I know no other possible; tho' there are some, who assign a third, namely, the *personal indwelling of the Spirit in believers*, (as they call it) and that wholly different from his being in any other person or things, by either of those ways before mentioned by us. This, I find, has been confidently asserted by some; and particularly by those called *Familists*: but before it be admitted, it is fit it should be examined; and that upon terms of Reason and Scripture: For by one or both of these it must be proved, or not at all.

1. And first, upon grounds of reason, I affirm, that it is impossible for the person of the Holy Ghost, by any other and different way from the two former, to be more in one man than in another. Forasmuch as his nature or essence being equally diffused through all things, and that nature or essence being likewise included in, and inseparable from his person; it carries in it a manifest contradiction, for *the nature* to be any where, and *the person* including it, and inseparably united to it, not to be there also. Add to this, that if the person of the Holy Ghost should substantially reside or inhabit more in one man than in another,

ther, it must needs be, because he is freely pleased so to do : But the manner of the divine existence is an attribute of his nature, and so cannot be an effect of his will : since what is purely *natural*, is also necessary, and *so far cannot be free*. For it is not free to God, whether he will be present to all and every part of the universe or no : but it is as necessary for him to be so, as Omnipresence is a necessary result of infinity. And infinity is the first and grand thing included in the very nature and notion of a deity. Reason therefore has nothing to say for *this personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost* in some certain Men, more than in others ; but explodes it as a mere figment and paradox, contrary to all the principles of natural theology.

2. In the next place therefore we are to see what the assertors of this *personal indwelling of the Spirit in believers* are able to produce for it from Scripture. And here we shall find nothing but arguments drawn from some Scripture-expressions, in which we are either said to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, as in *1 Cor. vi. 19.* or that the Spirit dwells in us, as in *Rom. viii. 11.* with other such like phrases importing inhabitation. Which way of existence, they say, cannot properly be applied to *accidents* ; such as are the sanctifying graces wrought

wrought in us by the Spirit ; but only to persons, who alone can be properly said to be in places, or temples. And this is all that they argue from Scripture.

But metaphors, we know, are but weak mediums to prove any thing. And I refer it to any one of a clear impartial reason to judge, whether, when the Spirit is said to be in us as in a temple, this does not, at the very first sight, appear to be a metaphorical expression ; the words importing no more, than that we should be as wholly devoted to God's use and service as a temple is. And, that as it is sacrilegious to alienate a temple to other worldly and profane uses ; so is it a piece of no less sacrilege and impiety, after we have consigned over, and, in a manner, dedicated ourselves to the Spirit, to make ourselves servants to sin, Satan, or the world. According to which way of speaking also in *Jer. iv. 14.* *vain thoughts* are said to lodge in mens hearts. And in *Coloss. iii. 16.* the Apostle speaks of the *word of Christ dwelling richly in them.* Both which expressions of *lodging and dwelling*, strictly taken, indeed import only a local presence, but yet are elegantly applied to thoughts, and such other things, as are no more than mere accidents existing in the soul : The meaning of the words being this ; that these things reside as constantly and

and familiarly there, as an inhabitant does in the house where he dwells. And he, that would strain any more from such texts, may sooner fetch blood, than any sound sense out of them; it being not always the way of Scripture to speak according to the philosophical exactness of things, but in a familiar known latitude of expression. Nor indeed is any thing more usual in the word of God, than to find actions proper to persons ascribed to qualities. As *wisdom is said to build her an house*, Prov. ix. 1. And *charity to think no evil, to hope all things, and to suffer all things*, in 1 Cor. xiii. 7. with innumerable the like instances. And therefore such places are manifestly short of proving the thing they are here alledged for.

And thus having shewn *in what sense the Spirit of God* may be said to *be in men*; I come now to the

Second general thing proposed, which was to shew, what it is *for men to be led by the Spirit*. Concerning which we must observe, that the word *leading*, taken by itself alone, without the addition of any particular term, to which we are said to be led, (*as Jesus was said to be led by the spirit into the wilderness*, Matt. iv. 1.) naturally and properly signifies a *guidance* of us, not in respect of any one particular action or passage of our lives, but in respect of the whole

whole course of them. And consequently, under this *leading of the Spirit*, we are not to consider those particular transports and extasies, whether by *prophecy*, or *vision*, which the Spirit of God has, at several times, raised some persons to. For these were sudden, transient beams, or flashes, upon extraordinary occasions, and not constant light to live and walk by. As therefore the *Spirit's leading us*, imports a continued steady direction of us in the whole course of our lives or actions, so it imports in it these two things.

1. His prescribing rules and laws to us, to which we are to conform our actions; and so he leads us by those excellent precepts held forth to mankind both in the Law and Gospel; both of which were dictated by the same eternal Spirit of truth.

2. His enlightning the understanding to discern, and his bending the wills and affections of men to comply with those rules and precepts so held forth to them. The first way, he leads us, by providing us a path to walk in; and the second, by giving us legs to walk with. For (as I said at first) there is since, and by the fall of man, that innate darkness in his understanding, that it is of itself unable spiritually to perceive the things of God; and that obliquity and rebellious-

ness

ness in his will, that it cannot heartily choose and embrace them. And therefore though the Spirit should lead us never so much by the former way, that is, by proposing to us rules and precepts to act by; yet it is impossible, that we should follow, till those indispositions are in some measure removed; and this is to be done only by the Spirit.

But since some there are so hardy (or profane rather) as to affirm, that to assert, that the Spirit imprints upon, or creates in any faculty of the soul any disposition or habit, that shall give it a facility in its actings, is *Enthusiasm*; and that, I suppose, because they may account every thing *Enthusiasm*, which is not *Pelagianism*: I answer, that if these persons will but own original sin, and a general depravation of man's nature consequent thereupon, (as they are hardly Christians, if they do not) I would fain learn, how nature shall be able to rid itself from the effects of this depravation or corruption, which has so universally seized all the powers of it, but by some certain principle distinct from and greater than itself. And I would fain know farther, why the almighty power of God's Spirit may not work in any faculty of the soul the same readiness, or permanent facility of acting (commonly by another word called *an habit*) which that faculty can

can produce, or acquire to itself by a frequent repetition of its own actions; especially since there is nothing, which the first cause produces by the mediation of the second, but what it can and sometimes does produce solely by itself, (except the vital acts issuing from, and denominating their respective powers or principles) in the number of which habits cannot be reckoned, but are qualities abiding in the soul, even while there is a total cessation from acting, and may be lost again; whereas the power or faculty, wherein they are vested, cannot. But as for those, who deny the immediate *infusion of habits* into the soul, they should do well to try their strength, and shew some principle of reason, or scripture, contradicted by it; and I dare undertake to alledge that from both, which shall bid fair for the proof of it.

And thus much for the two ways, by which the *spirit leads men*; namely, 1. outwardly, by the written word. And, 2. inwardly by his *illumination of the judgment, and bending of the will*. Concerning which this must carefully be observed, that though the spirit frequently, nay ordinarily leads men the former way without this latter; as being indeed rather a *direction*, or bare pointing out, whither we should go, than a *leading us*, (forasmuch as many are so led, or directed, who never fol-

low)

low) yet now-a-days the Spirit never leads men the latter way, namely, by his effectual inward operation upon the soul, but he does it in conjunction with the *former*; that is, first holding forth a rule in the word *written*, or *preached*, and then working those gracious dispositions, abilities, or fitnesses in the soul, which shall cause it actually to comply with, and square its actions to the same.

And these are all the ways, by which the spirit of God leads the church now. But as I shew concerning the *Spirit's being in men*, that there were some, who besides his *being in them* by his essential omnipresence, and by those effects which he works within them, held a third distinct way, namely, *his personal indwelling in believers*; so there are some likewise, who, besides the Spirit's leading men by the written word, and by his enlightning the understanding, and bending the will, assert yet another way; namely, the Spirit's speaking inwardly to them, and directing them by a Secret uttered (as they pretend) intelligibly enough to the soul of him, to whom it is spoke, though unknown to any person besides. And if we will give things their right names, this is truly and properly *Enthusiasm*, that pestilent and vile thing, which, wheresoever it has had its full course, has thrown both church

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and state into confusion. For if men may be admitted to plead, *that the spirit leads them by an inward voice speaking to them, and known only to themselves*, it is impossible, that they should acknowledge any rule or governor of their actions *but themselves*. The folly and mischief of which pretence therefore I shall endeavour to make appear (which is the principal design of this discourse) from several considerations: but before I come to mention particulars, I shall give you one remarkable instance, and home to the subject now before us. And it is this; that the main instrument and engine, which that grand and vilest of impostors *Mahomet* first set up with, in the venting and offering his blasphemous impostures to the world, was *this secret, inward voice of the Spirit* conversing with him, and revealing to him the several heads of his detestable religion: which as no body did, or could pretend to be conscious to, but himself; so I will maintain that upon this principle of the *inward voice of the Spirit*, there is no body since *Mahomet* (no not the Whigs demi-god *Oliver* himself) but might (had he met with such an amazing torrent of success as *Mahomet* found) have carried on any enthusiastick design as effectually, as ever that monster did. But now to pass to those particular considerations, before pro-

promised by us, for the beating down and exploding this secret voice of the Spirit, which such hypocrites so confidently pretend to be led by, you may observe as follows:

1. That the word of God in Scripture is proposed and declared by the Spirit itself speaking in the same as a rule both necessary and sufficient for men to be led and acted by in all their spiritual concerns; and consequently no such inward word or voice from the same Spirit to the soul of any particular person whatsoever can be proved or allowed to be such a rule. For if this *inward word* pretends to *reveal* the very same things, which are actually revealed in the said Scripture already, in that case such revelation being but the bare repetition of truths, both already revealed and sufficiently confirmed, it cannot pass for a rule really necessary; nor, on the other side, if it speaks things different from (and much more, contrary to) what the written word speaks (supposing the said written word to be a full and sufficient rule both for belief and practice, as all who receive it must hold it to be) can this inward voice and word then, in the proper notion of a rule, be so much as allowable. For does not the Scripture stand vouched by apostolical and divine authority, as *able to make the man of God perfect? and to furnish him to every good*

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work? And will not all this satisfy? or would these men have any more? But alas! as good works (especially in the matter of justification) use to be accounted dangerous things; so whatsoever these men's *new faith* in the inward word or voice of the Spirit may do for them this way, I dare say that *their good works* are never like to *justify*, or *sanctify*, either them, or their religion; as will appear from the

Second and next consideration; which is the great and just suspiciousness of the forementioned pretence, *that the inward word or voice of the Spirit is the rule, which it leads men by*, in that it is seldom, or never alledged, but for the patronage of such actions, as cannot be warranted or defended upon any other account whatsoever. For you shall never hear such men pleading, that the Spirit tells them, they must obey their governors, reverence the church and the ministers of it, be charitable to the poor, behave themselves justly to all, injure no body, defraud no body, and the like; which duties both reason and the written word of God so much press and inculcate. But when the yoke of government begins to fit uneasy upon their unruly necks, or when they have run themselves out of their estates, and so come to cast a longing eye upon the revenues of the church, or of their rich neighbours
about

about them ; why then the word, that commands obedience, and forbids all violence and injustice, presently becomes not only a *dead*, but a *killing letter*, and a *beggarly rudiment*, and in comes the Spirit with a mighty controlling force to relieve and set them at liberty, teaching them to bind *kings with chains*, and *their nobles with fetters of iron* ; assuring them withal, *that the godly only have any right to possess the earth*. And if so, then let them alone to persuade themselves (and others too if they can) *that they only are the godly* ; and that by rules and arguments, which the Scripture is wholly a stranger to. For the Scripture, all know, is look'd upon by these seraphick pretenders, as a very mean insignificant thing ; and never made nor intended to direct such sons of perfection, but to be directed and overruled by them. And now let any one judge, whether that *inward voice or word* can proceed from the Spirit, which is still urged in justification of those actions and opinions, which neither *law* nor *gospel* (though both of them infallibly dictated by that very spirit) can speak one word for.

3. *A third argument* against the same pretence is, that such a pretence is contrary to the *experience of the generality of christians*, and *those also the most pious, humble*, and best ex-

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exercised in the ways of God of any others. For did the *Apostles themselves* pretend to any such thing? Or did the primitive professors of Christianity, and the martyrs of the church, own any thing, but the *written word* of God, as that which they were to *believe and practise* by? Or did they acknowledge, that the *Spirit whispered* any thing to their souls by any immediate voice distinct from the Scripture? Which yet they would certainly have found, had this been the way, by which the *Spirit of God* led believers. For there is no question, but that as all of them were still led by the same Spirit, and that to the same great end, so they were led also by the same way: there being but one way to heaven and happiness, both then and now established by God; the same things being *to be believed*, and the same things *to be practised*, and those also generally the same way *to be learn'd*, in order to men's salvation.

4. A fourth argument against this pretence of an inward word, or voice, being the rule, which the Spirit leads men by, is, that such a pretence directly opens a door to all *profane-ness and licentiousness of living*. For the Spirit of God being God, who gave mankind the laws, which they are to live by; and it being clear, that the same power, that gave or en-acted

acted the law, can dispense with its obligation in any particular instance of duty, let a man but persuade himself, that the *Spirit* dwells *personally* in him, and speaks upon all occasions to him; how easily and readily may he plead, that the *Spirit* tells him he may kill his enemy, plunder his neighbour, cast off all obedience to his governors? And if the written law of God commanding the contrary be alledged to such an one, he may presently reply, that the same God, that made that law, does by an inward voice speaking to him, exempt him from the obliging power of it, in such and such actions. Upon which account, let a man be never so much a villain, provided he be so *in a godly sort*, and will patronize all his lewd practices by the authority of the *Spirit*, it is impossible that that man should sin; forasmuch as the *Spirit* takes off the obligation of the law to his hand; so that though it may bind the rest of mankind, yet he is dispensed with, and stands particularly excepted from that common rule.

Thus the late rebel army having conquer'd and imprison'd their consciences as well as their prince, *completed* all by bringing the *Spirit* to their lure, and reducing Enthusiasm to an act; still governing all their transactions with their abused Sovereign by this invincible

principle which enabled them with so much ease to charge through the obligation of all laws, oaths, and promises whatsoever: So that in their several treatings with the King, being asked by him, whether they would stand to such and such agreements and promises, they still answered him, that *they would do, as the Spirit should direct them*. Whereupon that blessed Prince would frequently condole his hard fate, that he had to deal with persons, to whom the *Spirit* dictated one thing one day, and commanded the clean contrary the next. In the strength of this almighty principle also, they would openly and professedly call their seizing upon the goods, lands, and estates of the royalists, *a robbing of the Egyptians*; affirming, that *the Spirit* had clearly revealed to them, that God had *alienated the right and property* of these estates from the other, and transferred it to them; so that they held what they had took from their neighbours, by immediate donation from God himself; which, could it have been proved, was undoubtedly the surest and the best title in the world. Upon the same principle also was it, that some of their factious preachers, having first fired their fellow-citizens into a rage against their king, the next day, upon their going to that *holy war*, come personally amongst

mongst them, and, in the name of God, pronounce them *absolved, and free from all former oaths and promises*; such as those of *supremacy, allegiance*, and the like, whereby they might otherwise think themselves obliged not to fight against their sovereign, whom they had so solemnly sworn obedience to: And lastly, upon the stock of the same principle was it, that one of their prime leading * doctors, being justly charged with schism, cleared himself from that imputation, by affirming, that *he knew himself to have the Spirit of God*, and therefore that he neither was, nor could be a Schismatick. Which worthy argument had he used to the Apostle St. *Paul*, I doubt not but he would have retorted it upon him, and told him, that his causeless separation from, and uncharitable invectives against the church, clearly proved him to be a Schismatick; and that therefore in that case he neither had nor could have the *Spirit of God*. But if the other end of the argument be took, what person is there so vile and wicked, who may not justify himself and his actions by it? For it is but for him confidently to assert and face men down, that *he has the Spirit*, and then he has sufficiently proved his actings good and pious, and agreeable to the *mind of God*, though directly contrary to *his law*; while the Spirit's impulse

is urged against the Spirit's commands, and his *secret word* bandy'd against his *written*; much like the late parliament's pressing men in the *King's name*, to fight against the *King's person*. And thus by this spiritual engine are all the laws of God, in the very name and authority of God himself, overturn'd and made of none effect: And if so, how will any laws or statutes, made by men, be able to stand before it? No; it presently breaks through all such cobwebs, and snaps asunder all these pitiful useless human ordinances, as unworthy to lay hold of such sons of perfection, as carry their law and their law-giver about them. For whatsoever the Spirit commands, that in all reason they must do; especially since they are upon such fair terms, that the *Spirit* never *commands* them, but what they *please*.

5. The fifth and last argument against this pretence of an *inward voice of the Spirit* is, that no man can assure either himself, or others, that the *Spirit of God* speaks inwardly to him. And can any man look upon that as a rule to be led by, which is itself wholly unknown to him? For let any pretender to the Spirit prove, that it is really the Spirit of God, which dictates this or that to him; and that, what he takes for the voice of the Spirit, is not indeed the dictates of his own mind or fancy, being
strongly

strongly fix'd upon some certain object. I have shewn elsewhere, that such as *plead conscience* could not evidence the reality and truth of that plea to others, however they might know it themselves. But here, when men *plead the Spirit*, they can neither make out the truth of what they plead to others, nor yet to themselves. For if they would prove, that the things suggested to their minds are inspired and suggested by the *immediate voice* of the Spirit, they must prove it either from the quality of the things themselves, or from some argument extrinſick to those things. From the former they cannot; for neither the antecedent goodness or badness of the things, that come into their minds, can prove them to have proceeded, or not proceeded from the Spirit; since this goodness is made a consequent of the Spirit's suggestion; so that whatsoever the Spirit inspires or suggests, is upon that very account rendered good: and the truth is, for this cause alone, is this inspiration pretended, *viz.* to stamp those things and actions good, which otherwise would not, could not be so; so that we must not prove the *Spirit's* suggestion *from the goodness of the thing suggested*; but on the contrary infer, that the thing so suggested *must needs be good*, because it is *suggested by the Spirit*. Which

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is a compendious way for a man to authorize and sanctify, whatsoever he does, thinks, or desires, by alledging, that the Spirit prompted it to him. And therefore that Fanatick spoke home and fully to the point, who said, " That " he had indeed read the Scripture, and frequented ordinances for a long time, but " could never gain any true comfort, or quiet " of mind, till he had brought himself to " this perswasion, that whatsoever he had " a mind to do, was the will of God, that " he should do."

It being most clear therefore, that men cannot prove the *Spirit's speaking to them*, from the *quality of the things* spoke ; they must fetch the proof of it from something else ; and that must be either from Reason, or Scripture, or Miracles. The first of these is not so much as pretended to ; for the persons, that pretend to the Spirit, generally lay the foundation of this pretence in the ruins of Reason, which they utterly decry. And for Scripture, this in effect is as much baulk'd as the other ; since the inward voice of the Spirit is still alledged in the behalf of those actions, that find no patronage from Scripture ; but so much of it as they rely upon, shall be considered, when I come to examine those Scripture-examples, by which these impostors would seem to defend them

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themselves. The last way therefore, by which they must prove this immediate extraordinary guidance of the Spirit inwardly speaking to them, must be by Miracles or Prophecies. And surely there is all the reason in the world, that those, who pretend a guidance of the Spirit singular and extraordinary above the rest of mankind, should be able to do something, which the rest of mankind cannot do: for so our Saviour argued of himself, *John x. 25. The works that I do, bear witness of me.*

But as for our *pretenders to the Spirit*, what is there extraordinary or miraculous in them, but impudence, falseness, and hypocrisy? Consider the late army, the weapons of all whose warfare were in this (abused indeed) sense *spiritual* with a witness; and what miracles did they do, besides turning our *rivers into blood*, robbing and cutting throats, and tumbling down *principalities and powers*, to settle Christ in his kingdom, and to make themselves his deputies, to rule the nations of the earth, till he came? In which office, when they were once settled, I suppose they would give him leave to stay away from his charge, as long as he pleased, and perhaps the longer the better. And then for their being able to prove any of their pretences by prophecy, we may take an estimate of the prophetick Spirit, which inspired them,

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them, by those famous prophecies of *Oliver's recovery and long life* two days before his death. As also, by the so much talk'd of prophecies of 1666, which for a long time made the first article of the Fanaticks creed, till that year came at length, and fired them out of it.

And here having touch'd upon miracles and prophecies, I thought good to remark this by the way, That their proving efficacy is not so universal, as to evince the truth or lawfulness of every thing, that they might be brought to prove; but only of such things as are essentially good, or of such as have their moral goodness or evil depending upon the free sanction of God's will, either commanding or forbidding them. As, for instance, the act of killing a man may be good or evil, according as it is done with or without sufficient authority; and the taking away a thing in another man's possession may be lawful or unlawful, according as the property is either altered or not altered; both of which, we know, are in the number of those things which God may freely dispose of. But if any thing or action have a natural turpitude or indecency in it, founded upon the essential relation of one thing to another, this being repugnant to the divine holiness to be the author of; no miracles nor prophecies, tho' never so exactly fulfilled, can prove such things

things to be the will or mind of God, that they should be done ; as is clear from *Deut. xiii. i, 2.* where if any one shews a *sign or wonder*, whereby he would persuade men to worship other gods, and that sign or wonder come to pass ; God positively warns his people, that no credit should be given to such signs or miracles ; and the reason is evident, because it is impossible for God to give his honour to another, or command the worship due to his divine nature to be conferr'd on idols, or on any thing but himself. But such *signs or miracles* come to pass only for the tryal of mens faith, to see whether they will by any means be drawn off from their duty or no. And therefore if any one should pretend an inward voice of the Spirit suggesting such things to him, and to prove that inward voice should shew a sign or miracle, neither the pretence of one, nor the authority of the other, ought to be admitted ; as being brought to confirm a thing directly contrary, both to God's nature, and his word.

And thus having shewn, that no man pretending to this guidance of the *Spirit*, by an inward voice speaking to him, can prove, that this is *indeed the Spirit of God*, by any argument, either from the quality of the things suggested by it, or from Reason, or Scripture, no nor yet from Miracles, or Prophecies ; I suppose

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suppose, I have sufficiently demonstrated, that
he has no way to prove it by at all.

And yet it must not be denied, that there
is another way pretended to, by which a man
may *certainly know* himself to have the Spirit,
though he cannot prove it; and that is by the
Spirit itself. For as light (they say) is seen
and discovered by itself, and its own inherent
brightness, without the help of any thing else
to discover it to the eye; and as first princi-
ples shine and shew themselves to the under-
standing by their own innate evidence, with-
out the help of any medium to prove them by;
so is it with the Spirit, that shews and disco-
vers itself to those, that have it, by itself, and
its own light, without any other argument
to declare it.

In answer to this, I affirm first; That this
assertion of the self-evidence of the Spirit shew-
ing itself to the soul of him, who has it, or
is led by it, must needs be false, as being di-
rectly contradicted by the Scripture, which
bids men examine themselves, and that parti-
cularly about this matter, *whether Christ*, (i. e.)
the Spirit of Christ be in them or no, 2 Cor.
xiii. 5.

The same Scripture bids *them also try the*
Spirits, 1 John iv. 1. which, no doubt, re-
spects the *Spirit* in a man's self, as well as in
others.

others. But surely nothing, that is *self-evident*, can be the proper subject of *examination*, or *tryal*: All examination being to make something clearer and better known, by being examined, than it was before, which *in things self-evident*, clear, and unquestionable, can have no place. For no man is ever bid to examine himself, whether he be alive or no; and whether he breathes and walks, while he is breathing and walking; for these things are self-evident to him: and if the Spirit were so too to him who has it, it would be altogether as senseless and absurd to bid such an one to examine himself, whether the Spirit were in him or no. But such absurdities are not the language of Scripture. And thus much to shew the falseness of the assertion itself. Now in the next place, for the argument brought to prove it, it is apparently fallacious, as depending upon the supposed parity of two instances, which indeed are not parallel. For though light is discerned by itself, because by itself it incurs into the eye, and first principles do by themselves shew and offer themselves to the understanding; yet I deny, that the *Spirit of God* shews itself to the soul *immediately by itself*, and its own *substance*, but by its *operations and effects*; which are distinct from the Spirit itself, and consequently require

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some rule to try, from what principle they proceed.

And that this is so, is manifest from this one consideration, That if the Spirit shews itself, and its glorious substance immediately to the soul, this would be properly the *beatifick vision*, nor would there be any difference in our knowing God here and hereafter : For then only we shall know him by sight, and intuition of his *glorious substance* ; which the Scripture calls, *a seeing him face to face, and knowing him as we are known*. From whence it being clear, that the Spirit of God not shewing itself to the soul immediately by itself and its *own substance*, as *light does to the eye*, but by the mediation of its operations, and effects upon the soul, *it follows*, that it is not discernable by itself, as *light* is, but by its operations ; which operations are triable and distinguishable by certain rules. And so much in answer to the prime and grand plea of Enthusiasm.

But here, if being driven off from the *Spirit's immediate evidencing of itself* to the soul, they shall take up in the *operations and effects of the Spirit*, and affirm, that these carry such light and evidence in them, as must certainly discover them to the soul to have been from the Spirit : I answer, that those, who alledge this, mean either, that the Spirit of God *can* exert

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exert such an operation upon the soul, as shall carry in it this *self-evidencing quality*, or that it *actually does so*. The former, though granted, would be nothing to the present purpose. And for the latter, I utterly deny it, and leave it to its assertors to prove; giving withal this reason for my denial of it; That nothing is more usual than for believers to be ignorant of the graces, that have been really wrought upon their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and thereupon to doubt, whether they are in a state of favour with God or no. For who more apt oftentimes to complain of and bemoan the hardness and pride of their hearts, than such as are truly tender, humble, and poor in Spirit? Which sufficiently demonstrates, that the operations of the Spirit do not always evidence themselves to the soul, though they have passed upon it in the production of real and great effects.

Having thus proved, that *no* man can be *sure*, that the Spirit of God leads him by any word or voice inwardly speaking to him; I suppose, I need not prove, that he is much less able to assure others of it besides himself. And yet this must be added and insisted upon, That supposing a man to make this the rule of his actions, he stands bound not only to *satisfy himself*, but *others also* concerning it; forasmuch as he is bound to give no just occasion

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of offence to his christian brethren; and consequently ought to render an account of the reason of his actings *to those*, who, upon great and sufficient ground, are scandalized at them; which the generality of Christians must needs be, when they see a professor of the same religion with themselves act contrary to that written rule, which they all judge themselves obliged to act and live by. But for them to satisfy others about this inward voice of the Spirit, which they can no ways evidence to themselves, is certainly impossible: And therefore this can by no means be admitted as a *rule*, for any man to be led by; since nothing can be properly a rule, but that, concerning which a man may *rationaly* satisfy both *himself* and *others*: which if he cannot, nothing that he does, by the direction of that *rule*, can be done either *in faith or without scandal*; and so long there unavoidably lies upon him, in all his life and actions, a necessity of sinning; the most deplorable condition certainly that can befall a man, as being the very high road to hell, and the direct way to damnation.

And thus I have given the reasons, why this *inward voice of the Spirit* cannot be the *rule*, which men are to be guided by. As namely;
 1. Because it infers, that the written word cannot be such a rule. 2. Because of its suspiciousness,

ciouſneſs ; for that it is never alledged, but in the behalf of ſuch actions, as can plead no allowance upon any other account whatſoever.

3. Becauſe it is contrary to the common experience of Chriſtians, and thoſe the moſt pious, knowing, and beſt acquainted with the ways of God. 4. Becauſe it opens a door to all licentiousneſs ; and, what is more, ſanctifies it with the name of piety and religion. And, 5. and laſtly, becauſe it is ſuch a rule, as a man can neither evidence to himſelf, nor to others, and yet is bound to do both. Which reaſons, I conceive, are abundantly ſufficient to explode, and extinguiſh this impudent and irrational pretence with all ſober and intelligent perſons whatſoever.

The remaining particulars ſhall (God aſſiſting) be thoroughly conſider'd and diſpatch'd in the following diſcourſe.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be render'd and aſcribed (as is moſt due) all praiſe, might, majeſty and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON VIII.

The Scripture a sufficient Guide
to Salvation.

DISCOURSE II.

ROM. viii. 14.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit
of God, are the Sons of God.*

HAVING (I presume) in my first discourse upon this important subject sufficiently exploded the bold fancies, and extravagant pretences of those sons of *novelty* and *inspiration*, by the foregoing reasons there produced against them; I shall now proceed to an examination of what they yet plead more for themselves, and this their daring, but absurd hypothesis. For these pretenders to an
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immediate impulse, and inward leading voice of the Spirit, will not rest satisfy'd so, but, for their farther defence, plead the example of several eminent saints and worthies of the church, doing several things (as they would persuade us) contrary to the express written word, and yet with sufficient evidence of the *divine approbation* : The reason of which seems not possible to be stated upon any thing but this, that the *Spirit of God* did by an inward voice raise them to, and consequently warrant them in those actions, notwithstanding any prohibition lying against them in the written letter of the word. Such, for instance, were *Abraham's* attempting to sacrifice his son *Isaac*. *Jacob's* deceiving his father, and defrauding and supplanting his brother *Esau* with a lye. Also the *Egyptian* midwives saving the *Hebrew* children ; and *Rahab* the harlot's saving the spies of *Canaan* by lyes and false affirmations. Likewise *Moses's* killing the *Egyptian*, while he was but a private person in *Pharaoh's* court. And *Phineas's* killing of *Zimri* and *Cozbi* after the same manner. Of the like nature was the *Israelites* robbing or spoiling the *Egyptians*. *Sampson's* killing of himself, that he might be revenged on the *Philistines*. *Ehud's* killing of *Eglon* King of *Moab*, to whom, with the rest of the children of *Israel*, he was at this

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time subject. *Jael's* killing *Sisera*, though he was in league with her husband, and upon that account was induced to take shelter in her house. Add to these, *Elijah's* killing the prophets of *Baal*, though being no *magistrate* he had no right against the *magistrate's will*, to execute justice upon his fellow-subjects, tho' never so worthy of death by law. With these (I say) and such other Scripture-examples, these pretenders to the *inward voice* of the Spirit, in opposition to his *written word*, use to defend themselves. In order to the examination of which instances, before I survey them severally, and apart, I shall premise these four general observations.

1. *That the actions of persons recorded in Scripture* are not proposed to us *as rules of direction to live or act by*: Laws and precepts are the only things intended for that purpose, and consequently are of an universal extent and obligation, and respect the actions of all mankind. But examples and instances, as they are *personal*, so they are also *particular*, and exhibit to us *matter of fact*, what *has been done*, but not *matter of duty*, what *ought*, or *ought not to be done*. For certain it is, that no contrary practices, though never so much allowed, even by divine approbation, do or can cancel any law made by God: But at the most declare,

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declare, that some persons have been *dispensed* with, in some things enjoined by law. And therefore as God's will to oblige men in general, where he makes no exception, and his will not to oblige some particulars, whom he is pleased to *except*, do no ways clash or contradict, but very fairly accord with one another; so those *examples*, which declare, where he has actually thus used his *prerogative*, do no ways abrogate, or repeal the standing obligation of those *laws*, which otherwise certainly bind mankind, where such exceptions have not interposed. And God might have many reasons, why he thought fit to deliver down to us, in sacred history, an account of such extraordinary actions and passages of mens lives, without ever intending them as *rules or patterns* for us to measure our actions by. As, for instance; partly to manifest the absolute-ness of his *prerogative and dominion* even over *his own laws*; partly to magnify the admirable contrivances of his providence, bringing about strange and great events by such unusual actions: partly also to declare, and shew the necessity of his grace, and withal the deplorable weakness even of the best of men, when he is pleased at any time to leave them to themselves: Besides other reasons best known to his *infinite wisdom*, and therefore such as
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may well become *ours* not to inquire into. And so much for the first observation.

2. *The second is this*; That God treated with men *in those first days of the church*, after a very different way from what he does in *these latter*, and since the times of the Gospel; in which he has given mankind the last and perfect *revelation* of his will, and withal completed and confirmed the whole canon of Scripture, as the great and full repository of that *revelation*. It may appear to any ordinary observation, that it has been God's method all along to discover himself to the world by degrees, and to train up his church from a less to a more perfect religion, still vouchsafing a greater measure of light to the latter ages of the church, than to the former, till at length he revealed himself, in the most absolute and perfect manner of all, by the Gospel of his son.

Now, as in those first ages of the church, the notions of religion were generally much weaker and more obscure than now-a-days, so God found it necessary sometimes, by extraordinary means and ways, to discover his mind to men; the common discoveries of it not sufficing for all the particular exigencies and occasions of the church; but as the most wise God, neither in nature, nor religion, ever does any thing in vain, so it is observable, that as more of his
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will came to be declared, and written by the prophets, so there were still fewer instances of these extraordinary declarations of it by the peculiar *suggestions* and *inspirations of the Spirit*. For in the days of *Samuel* we read, that *the vision of the Lord was rare and seldom*, 1 Sam. iii. 1. And in the days of *Isaiah*, and the other immediate following prophets, much rarer; and from *Malachi* to *John Baptist*, the extraordinary and prophetick *Spirit* seems wholly to have ceased. But when the *Messias* was come, whose business it was to reveal the whole mind of God, and to confirm it by the highest proof of miracles, that could be given, and so to establish a perpetual and universal rule, which should last to the world's end, and answer all the possible occasions of his church; what reason can there be now assigned, why any inward extraordinary inspiration of the Spirit should be thought necessary to guide men in those actions, which the Spirit has provided a standing, full, and sufficient rule for already?

The ground of God's dealing with, and speaking to some persons after such a singular and peculiar manner in those first times, was the imperfect œconomy of the church then; and the imperfection of its œconomy was founded upon this, that it was all that time

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in a state of expectation; by every thing almost; whether ordinary or extraordinary, pointing *at the Messias* yet to come: Who being now actually come, and exhibited, the reason of those things must by consequence cease; nor can the extraordinary motions of the Spirit, whether by *prophecies, miracles, or new revelations*, be of any *necessity* to the church at all. Granting therefore, that God did indeed, in those first times of the church, direct and move many men by *immediate impulses, and inward voices* of the Spirit; yet the same is by no means pleadable from thence by any living under the christian œconomy, forasmuch as the cause, for which God vouchsafed it then, is wholly at an end now. Whereupon the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, in *Heb. i. 1, 2.* tells us, *That God, who in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his son.* In which words he clearly shews, that this one way of *God's speaking by his son*, was instead of all those *other ways of his speaking to men formerly*; and consequently, that after he comes once to speak to us this way, those other ways of his manifesting himself are no more to be expected: Christ, the great prophet, who was to make known all the will of his father, being thus come.

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But still this is to be supposed, that under the *coming of Christ* we are to comprehend the proof and declaration of that his coming, by the signs and miracles wrought for that purpose, both by himself and his Apostles; by which the Spirit of God having done enough to convince the world, that the *Messias* was indeed come, and that *Jesus of Nazareth* was the *Messias*, and his doctrine the full and last *revelation* of the mind of God to mankind; this, I say, being thus effected, there is, upon no terms, the same reason alledgeable for the continuance of those extraordinary motions and impulses of the Spirit in the church *now*, which the Scripture tells us, were vouchsafed to many eminent worthies in the church *heretofore*: and so much for the second observation.

3. The *third*, and principal is this; That there has been no man, whom the Spirit of God immediately, and after an extraordinary manner, used to move or inspire, but has been attended with those signs and characters, by which he has been visibly known and took notice of by all about him to have been such an extraordinary person. That this was so *de facto*, will appear by running over the several persons, to whom God used thus to manifest himself, either in the Old or New Testament; where you will find those remarkable
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manifestations of God's presence with them, whether by miracles, or other extraordinary and supernatural passages relating to their persons, so that all people knew them to be prophets, and men sent and inspired by God. Nor indeed in reason could it be otherwise, considering that the design of God, in raising up such men, was to signify his mind by them to the world, whose duty thereupon it was to hearken unto them, and to obey them speaking in the name of God. But if those persons did not carry upon them such marks and signs, whereby people should be enabled to know and discern them to be really what they professed themselves, it was impossible but men must unavoidably sometimes listen to impostors and false prophets, and sometimes reject the true; there being no certain mark, whereby to distinguish and know them one from another. For if their own word and affirmation were sufficient to vouch their mission, it is evident, that false prophets could, and did affirm themselves to be inspired, and sent by God, as much as those who were so indeed. And thus much for the third observation.

4. The *fourth* and last is this; That when any action, unwarranted by the rule of *God's written word*, has been done by a person, not known by any remarkable sign to have been led

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led and acted by an extraordinary Spirit, nothing can warrant *such* an action to have been allowed by God, but only God's own *subsequent approbation of it*, declared either immediately by himself, or by some person known to be inspired by him. And therefore if the Enthusiasts of our times will warrant any of their lawless, irregular actions, to have been done by authority of divine impulse, if they cannot by *miracles and signs* prove themselves to be persons inspired, as were *Moses, Sampson, Elias*, and such others; yet let them shew, at least, that God has passed some particular approbation upon what they have done, as he did upon the action of the *Egyptian* midwives, of *Rahab* the harlot, and *Jael's* killing *Sisera*, and the like. But then also this approbation must be made in express words, and not gathered only from the success of the action; which if it be a sufficient declaration of God's being pleased with any action, then none would have so fair and full a plea for the lawfulness of what they do, as the *Turk*, or any victorious infidel, prospering in any great villany that he undertakes. Yet this was the constant plea, and current divinity of the saints of the late times (revived in these;) this, I say, was still the beaten theme of those *Balaams* in their *thanksgiving sermons*, all along

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proving God's approbation of their cause by the success of it; that is, taking their *text out of the Bible*, and their *proofs out of the Alcoran*.

Now these four rules or observations being premised, namely, 1. That examples are not recorded in Scripture as rules of action. 2. That the Spirit of God treated with the church heretofore in a very different way, from what *He* does since the time of Christ. 3. That persons extraordinarily inspired, were known to be such by visible signs and characters of God's presence with them. 4. That where these signs appeared not, no action done besides the rule of God's written word, could or can pretend to have been done with divine allowance, without a subsequent divine approbation expressly pass'd upon in: These rules, I say, being thus laid down, I shall now by the light of them examine the several instances above alledged; many of which will be found lawful and allowable by the standing rules of God's law, howsoever they have been produced in behalf of *extraordinary inspiration*.

1. And first for the example of *Abraham going about to sacrifice his son*. It is certain, that to kill any one (much more a son) without sufficient authority, is a sin; and what it is a sin to *do*, must be a sin also to *attempt*. To clear this act of *Abraham* therefore from sin,
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we must affirm him to have done it with sufficient authority; which could be derived only from God, who alone has a plenary right to dispose of the *lives of innocent men*. But God does not by any written law give men power to take away the lives of such persons. And therefore all authority and warrant derived from him in this matter, must have been fetched from an immediate and extraordinary revelation of his divine will commanding, and thereby authorizing *Abraham* thus to deal with his son: So that an extraordinary voice, or dictate of the Spirit, must here be confessed. But then, that this is not here pleaded in the behalf of *Abraham gratis*, and upon such grounds as any man may plead the like, is evident from those many other extraordinary passages of his life. As God's appearing to him in *Ur*, of the *Chaldees*, and bidding him leave his country. Three Angels lodging with him, and God's discoursing with him as familiarly as a man does with his friend, about the destruction of *Sodom*; together with his strange procreation of a son in his old age. All which were sufficient demonstrations, that he was a person, whom God dealt with after an immediate and extraordinary manner; and different from the common way of his speaking to, and dealing with the rest of mankind.

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2. For *Jacob's* supplanting his brother *Esau*, though God had designed him the *birth-right*, yet the manner of his procuring it was throughout the whole action sinful and fraudulent; nor have we any cause to conclude it to have been pleasing to God, or commanded by him; and much less intended for a rule or example to warrant any to do the like; there being not one word in Scripture, that intimates the divine approbation of it.

3. For the *Egyptian* midwives saving the *Hebrew* children, and *Rahab's* saving the spies of *Canaan* by lyes and false affirmations; the humanity, charity and mercifulness of the action, was the only thing commended and approved by God; but the adherent circumstance of it, that it was done by a lye, was sinful, and no ways approved by him, nor consequently to be imitated by us.

4. For *Moses's* killing the *Egyptian*, while he was a private person in *Pharaoh's* court; we are to deny the supposition, that he was a *private person* at that time, but that he was even then commissioned by God governor of *Israel*; and consequently in the right of a governor, might revenge the wrong done to his subjects. For though we find not a particular account, *how* and *when* God invested *Moses* in the government of his people, while he lived
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with *Pharaoh*; yet that the right of governing them was by God conferred upon him, is evident from *Acts* vii. 25. where the Spirit of God by the mouth of *St. Stephen* speaks that of *Moses*, that must needs imply so much. For it is said, that when *Moses* slew the *Egyptian*, *he supposed, that his brethren would have understood, that God had raised him up to be their deliverer*, and consequently their governor. And if he supposed, that this would have been understood by others, it could not be, but that he, at that time, must needs have known and understood it himself.

3. For *Phineas's* killing of *Zimri* and *Cosbi*, he did it by the express command of *Moses* the supreme magistrate, who in *Numb.* xxv. 5, commanded the *judges of the people*, of which *Phineas*, the second person in the priestly dignity, cou'd not but be one, to fall upon such as *had joined themselves to Moab, and to slay every one his man*. So that there is no need here to recur to any extraordinary motion of the Spirit, to authorize this action of *Phineas*; nor yet to that *jus zelotarum*, asserted by some amongst the *Jews*.

6. For the *Israelites spoiling of the Egyptians*, *Exod.* xii. 36. though it is manifest, that what they did, was by the express command of God signified to them by *Moses*,

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whose great and mighty miracles sufficiently declared him to be one, to whom God used to speak after a peculiar and extraordinary manner; yet to state the lawfulness of the action upon other grounds also, we must know that the word *לָקַח* here translated *borrowing*, may signify either to *borrow*, or barely to *ask* or *demand* a thing of another. If we take it in the first sense, we have no cause to conclude, but that, when the *Israelites* borrowed such and such things of the *Egyptians*, they were borrowers *bonâ fide*, and knew not at that time of borrowing, but that, after they had sacrificed to God, they might come back again and make restitution; but God afterwards prohibiting their return, and thereupon rendering it unlawful, and withal the *Egyptians* pursuing them as enemies, it became impossible for them to restore, what they had borrowed; and being so, though the *Egyptians* lost what they had lent them, yet it was without any fraudulence or injustice on their part, who were the borrowers. But then, if we take the word in the *other sense*, as it signifies only the bare *asking* or *demanding* of a thing; (as the best expositors upon the place confess the word to be rendered *borrowing*, rather than *asking*, more from the circumstances of the case in hand, than from the proper force and signification of the word :) I say, if we
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take it thus, no more can be gathered from the text, but that the *Israelites*, upon their departure, asked such and such things of the *Egyptians*, and they freely gave them what they asked; which was very agreeable to that condition of fear and terror they were in, thro' the repeated infliction of so many plagues upon their land; which might well at that time make them ready to part with any thing to the *Israelites*, as being desirous to be rid of them upon any terms. So that which way soever we take the word, there was nothing sinful or unjust in the action, nor applicable to their purpose, who from this and such like Scriptures, think they may plunder their neighbours *jure divino*, and rob and pillage by commission from God himself. Nor yet does that word *spoiling of the Egyptians* import any injustice in the proceeding; forasmuch as it does not of necessity denote any unlawful *intention* in the *taker* or *borrower*, but only the *event of the action* in respect of the lender; who, if he loses his estate, is equally *spoiled and undone*, whether the means, by which he is bereaved of it, were just or unjust. And so much for this instance. In the

Seventh place. As for that of *Sampson's* killing himself, we must know, that self-murder is to be measured by the prime and direct

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intention of the person who does it; and not by any event accidentally and secondarily attending an action designed to much another end. *Sampson*, being chief magistrate of the children of *Israel*, might destroy the *Philistines*, who were their enemies; and this was the thing primely, nay solely intended by him, and not the taking away his own life, which, no doubt, he wish'd that in that action he could have preserved from the common ruin, though he knew that the cause was such, that while he took away his enemies lives, he shou'd by consequence lose his own. And this, some are of opinion, was altogether as lawful, as for a captain to descend into battle to fight for his country, though he knew certainly, that he should die in the encounter. I cannot affirm the cases to be parallel; yet certainly *Sampson's* action could not strictly and properly be called self-murder, there being in it no design against his own life, though there was a neglect of it, which in a just cause is very allowable. But if we admit here of an extraordinary motion of the Spirit, inciting *Sampson* to do what he did, the eminent and miraculous assistance vouchsafed him by the Spirit in that very action, is abundantly sufficient to credit and make good that allegation. In the

Eighth place. For *Ehud's* killing of *Eglon*, king of the *Moabites*; besides that he seems to carry his authority in those words, in which he is said to have *been raised up by God to deliver Israel*, *Judges* iii. 15. we must know that *Ehud* is not here to be looked upon as *Eglon's* rightful subject, but as his enemy. For the *Israelites* were then in *captivity* and *bondage* to the king of *Moab*, who *oppress'd* them. But a state of *captivity*, where no league or compact supervenes, is a state of *hostility*; and consequently, when the captives can get power enough into their hands, they have as much right to attack the lives of their enemies, as if they met them in battle upon an open and professed war.

9. For *Jael's* killing of *Sisera* the captain of *Jabin's* host, *Judges* iv. 21. when (as some judge from the text) there was a league between *Jabin* and her husband *Eber* the *Kenite*, which league must equally bind her; both husband and wife being politically but one person: I answer, that both she and her husband are to be supposed to have been under a precedent league with the *Israelites*, under whose protection they lived, and whose religion they professed; and consequently no subsequent league with their enemies could discharge them from the obligation of the

former. And by that they were obliged to prosecute the enemies of *Israel*, as much as were the *Israelites* themselves. But I add, secondly, that the text speaks not of any league between *Jabin* and *Eber*, but says only, that *there was peace between them*; which, I conceive, implies no more of necessity, than a mutual forbearance of acts of hostility, and a neighbourly intercourse thereupon; which might be without the obligation of any league, or contract; and very well cease, when a league inconsistent with that peace should engage them in a state of war. In the

Tenth and last place. It must be confessed, (and there is no colour of pretence against it) that *Elijah* acted by the impulse of an extraordinary *Spirit*; which was sufficiently manifest to all *Israel*, both from the miracles done by him in his life, and his miraculous translation, whereby he was privileged from death and mortality, the common lot of the rest of the world. And therefore we need not question, by what authority *Elias* executed the sentence of the law upon the idolatrous priests of *Baal*, though he was neither supreme magistrate himself, nor yet commissioned by him.

And thus I have gone over ten of the principal scripture-instances, by which our modern Enthusiasts would defend their lawless irregular

regular actings. Seven of which I have yet proved justifiable upon the principles of common right and morality: so that there remain but three, to wit, of *Abraham*, *Sampson* and *Elias*; the justification of which must be derived from the immediate and extraordinary impulse of the *Spirit*. And these were persons so eminent for the extraordinary presence of God with them, in so many other passages of their lives, that we may well venture the result of the whole matter upon this; and allow our Enthusiasts to act as much besides the rule of God's written law as ever they did, provided they will give us such undeniable evidences of an extraordinary spirit moving them; as they in their several ages gave the world. For this we do, and must constantly deny, that the authority of such an extraordinary spirit was ever owned, or admitted upon the mere *affirmation* or word of the persons pretending to it; but upon one or both of these conditions: namely, 1. That the pretenders to it had otherwise, by several signs or miracles, proved themselves to have been acted and inspired by God after an extraordinary way: or, 2. That the actions, for which they make this plea, were commended and owned by the subsequent approbation of God himself.

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Neither of which conditions being now producible by the Enthusiasts of our times, it follows, that those *Scripture*-examples are of no force at all to warrant them in their pretences to an extraordinary spirit; nor are arguments to prove any thing so much, as the knavery of those, who make this pretence, and the folly of those, who allow it.

And thus I have at length finish'd the second and main general head proposed for the discussion of the words; which was to shew, *what it is for men to be led by the Spirit*. I proceed now to the

Third, which is to declare, what is meant in the text by *being the sons of God*. The relation of *father* and *son* in Scripture is taken two ways, *properly*, or *improperly*. In the proper acceptation of it, it is founded upon generation: but improperly taken, it is founded (for the most part) upon one of these two things, *adoption*, or *imitation*. The latter of which, I conceive, gives the denomination here, though by consequence also it infers the persons so denominated to be sons by *adoption*. Now for this sonship by *imitation*, which consists in the cognation or conformity of a man's actions to the example or will of another, we have it fully and emphatically set forth to us in *John* viii, where Christ proves the *Jews* not to

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have been the sons of Abraham, because they did not the works of Abraham: but to have been of their father the devil, because by doing of the works of the devil, they had made themselves his sons. And the same is yet more fully expressed in 1 John iii. 10. *In this are the children of God manifest, and the children of the devil.* And what this is he tells us in the foregoing verses, in the 8th of which he says, *that he, who committeth sin, is of the devil*; and in the 9th, *that he who is born of God, sinneth not*: which negative term of *not sinning* is, in the 7th verse, positively expressed by *working righteousness*: And in the 10th particularly, by the acts of charity, *in loving our brother*. Which is a comprehensive term, implying all the duties of the second table, as *loving God* takes in and comprehends all the duties of the first; according to the best and most authentick explication given of this subject by our Saviour himself. He therefore, in the Apostle's sense, *is the son of God*, who does the works of God; and he does the works of God, who loves his brother; and he loves his brother or neighbour (which in Scripture are terms synonymous) who pays obedience to his governors; who neither kills nor mischiefs his neighbour in his person, nor defiles his bed, nor invades his property, nor traduces his good name, nor
yet

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yet covets or casts a longing eye upon any part of his substance or estate: but on the contrary prosecutes him with all the acts of justice, love and charity, which oppose the forementioned injuries and violences prohibited in the law.

Now this being the genuine explication of the words, let us cast them into argumentation. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God* (says the Apostle) *are the Sons of God*. The proposition is universal, and perhaps also the terms of it convertible; but whether they are or no, I am sure, it being a right and legitimate way of arguing, from the removal of the consequent to the denial of the antecedent, this inference must needs be firm and good; *that those, who are not the sons of God, are not led by the Spirit*. Now whether those, who rebel, and prosecute their rebellions with murders, rapine and sacrilege, who plunder their neighbours, and perjure themselves, who libel church and state, and throw all order into confusion, can be accounted the *sons of God* in that Scripture-sense, in which *those only are the sons of God, who do the works of God*, let any one judge. If *they are not the sons of God*, I have shewn, *that they are not led by the Spirit*: But if they think they can prove themselves the *sons of God*, while they practise these and the like

like enormities (as no doubt they either do, or would persuade themselves;) I will undertake to prove, that *such sons of God* are certain *heirs of damnation*.

Come we now to the fourth and last thing proposed, which is to gather some conclusions by way of use and inference from the foregoing particulars. The conclusions shall be two.

1. That persons thus pretending to act by an inward *voice*, or impulse of the Spirit, in opposition to the rule of God's *written* word, are by no means to be endured in the communion of a Christian church, as being the highest scandal and reproach to religion, indeed a much higher and greater than drunkards, swearers, or robbers upon the highway. For though these persons by such practices disobey, and consequently dishonour the religion they profess; yet they pretend not, that their villanies have any countenance or warrant from religion, so as thereby to lose their guilt, and cease to be villanies. But now, such as pretend to be led by the extraordinary *motions of the Spirit*, do, by that, affirm every thing that they do to be lawful, and suitable to the mind of God; those very actions, which in other men are sinful and abominable, as done by themselves through the authority of the Spirit, putting

putting on quite another nature: So that their *killing* is *no murder*; their plundering their neighbour, *no robbery*; their violating his bed, *no adultery*; their resisting and fighting against their King, *no rebellion*; for the Spirit by an inward voice or motion, dissolving the bonds of those laws, which tie up other men from these actions, does in the meantime authorize and empower them to act all these things innocently, piously, and perhaps meritoriously too; than which it is impossible for the wickedness of man to utter or conceive any thing more highly opprobrious to God and to religion. Villains may fly to the altar to escape the *punishment* of their sin, but that they should fly to religion to excuse and take off the *guilt* of their sin, this is to make the altar itself a party in the crime, and the Almighty, not so much a pardoner, as a patron of their guilt. This is certainly next to the sin against the Holy Ghost, (if that sin may be committed now-a-days) and possibly one kind of that sin itself. For if the *Pharisees* are said to have sinned against the Holy Ghost by *blaspheming* him, and that blaspheming consisted in their attributing those works, which were done by the Holy Ghost, to the power of the devil; pray, what difference, in point of blasphemy, is there between that and the ascribing those

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those villanies, which are done by the *instigation of the devil*, to the impulse and suggestion of the *Holy Ghost*? For my part, I can perceive no more, nor other difference in the blasphemy of these two assertions, than there is in the same way, as it leads from *Thebes* to *Athens*, and from *Athens* to *Thebes*. For the *Spirit* can be no less dishonoured and blasphemed by having the works of the devil ascribed to him, than by having his own works ascribed to the devil.

2. The other conclusion or inference is this; that as these pretenders are upon no terms to be endured in the church, for the scandal they bring upon religion; so neither are they to be tolerated in the *state*, for the pernicious influence they have upon society. Whether the original right of civil government were from *compact* or no, has been disputed; but that the actual subsistence and continuance of it stands upon *compact* observed and made good, is past question: I mean that compact and agreement, whereby all agree to submit and be subject to the same laws. For if one half of a nation agree to live in subjection to such laws, and the other half refuses all submission to the same, and both parts be equally strong, the government must of necessity fall in pieces. And upon this account, no subject has any right to claim protection of the government
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he is under, any longer than he submits to the laws of that government.

But now the *Enthusiasts*, we speak of, pretending to be led and govern'd immediately by the *Spirit*; whose inward voice is the only *rule* and *law* they hold themselves obliged to live and act by; by virtue of which also they plead themselves authorized to do many things, which the written laws of God and man forbid, and to omit many things, which the same written laws enjoin; with what face or confidence can they expect the protection of the government they live under, when they profess themselves to live by a law wholly differing from those laws, to the observers of which alone that government promises protection? Is it reason, that my neighbour should live at peace by me, and enjoy his estate only by my conscience of, and obedience to that law, which forbids me to rob or steal from him; and he in the mean time proceed by an inward law, which exempts him from the same obligation, and allows him, when he pleases, to seize upon my estate, and rifle me? I say, is there, can there be any reason, that such a fellow should be safe from me by my subjection to the laws of my country, and I not be mutually safe from him by his subjection to the same? No, certainly; where the benefit
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of the law is his, the *obligation* of it ought to reach him too, or there will be no *equality*, and consequently no *society*. He therefore, who shall presume to own himself thus led by an *inward voice, or instinct of the spirit*, in opposition to the laws enacted by the civil power, has forfeited all right to any protection from that power, and has, *ipso facto*, out-lawed himself, and accordingly as an out-law ought he to be dealt with; and if by these impulses and inspirations he shall dare to offend capitally, the magistrate must assert his rights, and vindicate the prerogative of his abused laws with the gibbet or the halter, the ax or the faggot; and this, if any thing, will cure such villains of that, which they call the *spirit*.

Infinite have been the disturbances given the world in general, and this poor kingdom in particular, by crafty persons sowing their hypocrisy by *pretences of religion*; of all which pretences none have been so frequent and fatally successful, as the two grand ones; *one of the spirit, the other of tender consciences*; concerning the highest pretenders to both of which I shall say no more, than that it is well for them, that *no sort of lyes whatsoever can choak them*; and well for the magistrate, *that something else can*; there being no casuist comparable

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ble to the *minister of justice*, to answer the sturdy scruples of an enthusiast disposed to rebel. For otherwise, as to matter of *duty*, whether to God or man, there can be no doubt or difficulty about it at all; that rule of our Saviour being infallible, for the discovery of all such pretenders, and spiritual cheats, *that by their fruits ye shall know them*. And the *fruits of the spirit*, (St. Paul tells us, *Galat. v. 22, 23.*) are *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance*, and the like; fruits which never grew in the same soil with *rebellion, murder, and sacrilege*. For as the same Apostle says, *those who live by the spirit, will walk by the spirit* too, since no man *subsists* by one vital principle, and *acts* by another.

To which eternal Spirit of truth, and holiness, together with the Father and the Son, be rendered and ascribed, as is most due, all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore.

Thank-

*Thankfulness for past Mercies, the way
to obtain future Blessings.*

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

WESTMINSTER-ABBAY, on the
Fifth of *November*, 1688.

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Thankfulness for past Mercies, the way
to obtain future Blessings.

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

Westminster-Abbey, on the
Eighth of November, 1688.

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SERMON IX.

Thankfulness for past Mercies,
the way to obtain future
Blessings.

ISAIAH 5. 4.

*What could have been done more to
my Vineyard, that I have not done
in it ?*

I Cannot think it the chief, much less the
sole business of this day, to declaim and
make invectives against the persons, whose vil-
lany occasioned the solemnity of it. Their
action was indeed bad enough, had we not
lived to see it transcended by many worse ; so
that were not Protestantism in itself a better
religion than Popery, it would have but little

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advantage from most of the persons, who profess it. For are we less proud, covetous, or rebellious, than the Papists? I am sure, if many that call themselves Protestants were so, we must make our reckoning from before six hundred and forty, or despair of finding them so since. All the wicked arts of the *Jesuits* have been first sanctified, and then acted under the splendid names of the *power of godliness, christian liberty, and the scepter and kingdom of Jesus Christ*, with other such words, as have writ their meaning with the sword's point, and now stand legible to posterity in letters of blood. Nor ought any to wonder, that I ascribe these reformers *practices* to *Jesuitish principles*; it being so well known, that the *Jesuit* never acts himself more than under another *person, name, and profession*.

Declamatory satyrs may indeed seem useless to all purposes whatsoever; it being impossible to revile away a distemper, or to cure a disease by an invective. But were they never so proper; though the church of *England*, whose principles and practices breathe nothing but loyalty to princes, may justify any hard speeches against the sons of *Rome*; yet surely the papists are not fit to be reviled by, nor indeed before many amongst us, who have acted worse things, and that with the aggravation

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vation of acting them under a better religion; unless it could be fit to arraign one Malefactor before another, who is himself a greater. I wish, that while we speak loud against those of the *Romish Church*, we could at the same time inwardly abhor and detest their impieties, and yet imitate their discretion; and be ashamed, that those *sons of darkness* should be so much *wiser in their generation* than we, that account ourselves such *children of light*. For be they what they will, it is evident, that they manage things at an higher rate of prudence than to fear a change in their *church-government* every six months, or to be persuaded by any arguments to cut their throats with their own hands, or amongst all their *indulgences* to afford any to their *implacable enemies*.

My business at this time shall be to make the mercy of the present day an occasion of declaring our great unworthiness not of this only, but of all other mercies; and that by a parallel instance; if so be our wickedness proves not too big for a parallel, and of that bulk, as to laugh at examples, and baffle all comparisons. For indeed our sins seem as much to surpass those of the *Jews*, the persons here upbraided by God, as all men would judge it more monstrous and intolerable, for a vineyard to answer the dresser's labour and expectation

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with a crop of thorns, than with a vintage of wild grapes. The words, that I have here fix'd upon, are a vehement complaint of God, uttered against the *Jewish* church and nation, his peculiar and most endeared people; and accordingly offer these two things to our consideration.

1. The form and manner of the complaint.

2. The complaint itself.

1. And first for the form and manner of it.

It runs in a pathetical interrogatory exclamation: which way of expression naturally and amongst men importing in it surprize and a kind of confusion in the thoughts of him who utters it, must needs be grounded upon that, which is the ground and foundation of all surprize, which I conceive is reducible to these two heads.

1. The *strangeness*. 2. The *indignity* of any thing, when it first occurs to our apprehensions.

1. And first for the *strangeness* of it. Whatsoever falls out either *above* or *beside* the common trace of human observation, and so puts the reason upon new methods of discourse, is that, which we call *strange*, and such as causes *surprize*; which is nothing else but a disturbance of the mind upon its inability to give a present account of the reason of what it sees
first

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first offered to it; from whence it is, that as a man comes still to know more, the strangeness of things to him grows less; and consequently nothing can be strange to him, to whom nothing is unknown. But how then come we here to find God himself under a surprize, and Omniscience as it were brought to a *non-plus*? Surely it could be no ordinary thing, that should thus put an infinite wisdom upon making enquiries. Nor indeed was it. For could any thing be imagined more monstrous, and by all rational principles unresolvable, than upon a most rich and fertile soil, fenced and enclosed against all injuries from abroad, dressed and manured by the finger of God himself, and watered with all the influences of a propitious heaven; I say, could any thing be more prodigious, than in such a place to see a fig-tree bear a thistle, or the fruit of the bramble load the branches of the vine? This is a thing directly against all the principles of mere nature, though not encouraged by the assistance of art: And therefore even the God of nature seems to stand amazed at the unnatural irregularity of such a monstrous event. But,

2. The other ground of such interrogatory exclamations is the unusual indignity of a thing: This being as great an anomaly in the morality

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of actions, as the former was in the nature of things; and therefore as that passion of the mind, raised by the strangeness of a thing, is properly called *wonder*, so that, which commences upon this, is properly *indignation*. It being a great trespass upon decency and ingenuity, and all those rules, that ought to govern those intercourses of rational beings; which are all crossed, and even dissolved, by that one grand fundamental destroyer of society and morality, which is *ingratitude*. For society subsists by the mutual interchange of good offices, by which the wants and concerns of men are mutually supplied and served; that being the only thing, that unites and keeps men together in civilized societies, who otherwise would range and raven like bears or wolves, and never but to seize a greater prey.

Now *ingratitude* is the thing here exclaimed against with so much abhorrence; a passion, that has all in it that wonder has, with the addition of something more; wonder resting merely in the *speculation* of things, this proceeding also to a practical *aversion* and *flight* from them. But since a sinner is no strange sight, nor can it pass for a wonder to see men wicked, what cannot be found in the bare nature of things, must be sought for in their degree; and therefore it must needs be some superlative height of wickedness, which drew
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from God this loud exclamation. What that is, will appear in the prosecution of the next thing, which is the *complaint itself*; for which there are these things to be considered.

1. The person complaining, who was God himself.

2. The persons complained of, which were his peculiar church and people.

3. The ground of this complaint; which was their unworthy and unsuitable returns made to the dealings of God with them.

4. And lastly, the issue and consequent of it; which was the confusion and destruction of the persons so graciously dealt with, and so justly complained of.

Of each of which briefly in their order.

1. And first for the person complaining, God himself. It must be confess'd, that according to the strict nature and reason of things, as he who knows all things cannot wonder, so neither can he, who can do all things, properly *complain*; *weakness* being the cause of complaining, as *ignorance* is of wonder. Yet God is here pleased to assume the posture of both; and therefore the case must needs be extraordinary. But how possible soever it may be for infinite power to complain, it is certainly impossible for infinite goodness to complain without a cause. So that we read the indubitable justness of the complaint in
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the condition of the person who makes it. A person transcendently wise, just, and merciful, who cannot be deceived in the measures he takes of things and persons, nor prevaricate with those measures by speaking beside the proportion of what he judges. And after all, he it is that complains, who has power enough to render all complaint needless; who has an omnipotence to repair to, and an outstretched arm to plead his cause in an higher dialect than that of words and fair expostulations. We see therefore the person here complaining, even the great and omnipotent God; and we may be sure, that where God is the *plaintiff*, no creature can, with either sense or safety, be the *defendant*.

The next thing to be considered, is the persons here complained of; and they were the *Jews*, the peculiar and select people of God; a people that had no cause to complain, and therefore the more unfit to give any to be complained of. From the beginning of God's taking them into his care and patronage, they were fed and maintained at the immediate cost and charges of heaven; they were directed with miracles, with new inventions and acts of providence, the course of nature itself still veiling to their necessities; the heaven, the sea, and all things dispensing with the standing laws of

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of their creation to do them service, in order to their serving of God. But it seems it was easier to fetch honey out of the bowels of the earth, to broach the rock, or draw rivers from a flint, than to draw obedience from them.

They were persons, who wore all the marks of the particular incommunicable kindneses of heaven: *God had not dealt so with any nation, says David, Psal. cxlvii. 20.* They seemed as an exception from (or rather above) the common rule of providence. A people whom God courted, espoused, and married, and by a yet greater wonder, *continued to court them even after marriage.* God thought nothing too good for them to enjoy, nor thought they any thing too bad for themselves to commit. They were a people cull'd and chose out of the rest of the world; in short, they were in some sense a *gathered congregation*, whom God thus horribly complains of.

3. The third thing to be considered is the ground of this complaint raised against them; which was their unworthy, unsuitable returns made to the dealings of God with them. Which will appear, first, by considering God's dealing with them; and secondly, their dealing with God; and so by confronting them both together, we shall give them all the advantage
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of contraries set off by nearness and comparison. We will begin with God's dealing with them, which consists of these three things.

1. That he committed his sacred word and oracles to them ; so that when all the world round about them had no other religion, than what they either derived from their own errors, or at best from their conjectures, these were taught by immediate and infallible revelation ; neither confounding themselves in the notion of God's nature, so as to own a multiplicity of deities ; nor yet of his worship, so as to serve him by absurd, and, what is worse, by impious practices, which yet the best and the most reputed of the Gentiles placed all their devotion in. In sum, they had that *sure word of prophecy*, which was *able to make them wise to salvation* ; while the neighbouring nations had such a religion, as neither represented them *wise* in this world, nor like to *be saved* in the next.

And yet as pure and as divine as the *Jewish* worship was, it had many more ceremonies than ours ; nor do we find any proviso for the abatement of the least of them, to gratify any *tender conscience* whatsoever ; though yet the nature of God, who was to be worshipped, and of the souls of men, who were to pay him that worship, were the same then that they

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they are now, and consequently apt to be helped or hindred by the same means; which one consideration is enough to cut the sinews of all the pitiful arguments, that the *Non-conforming Comprehensive* Sages did, or do, or ever will produce. But we understand the men; they strike indeed at the church, but their aim is farther, and, if God prevents not, their blow will follow it.

How this prophane atheistical age may rate things, I know not; but believe it, the accounts of *England* run high in the books of heaven, for the religion, which God has planted amongst us. A religion refined from all that superfluous dross, which the *Romish* is generally and justly charged with; and yet so prudent in its œconomy and constitution, as not to leave itself wholly unprovided of decency in circumstantialia, which are the necessary appendants of all human actions; and consequently being left to the arbitrement of every man's various fancy, would be so differing, loose, and extravagant, that should but a sober heathen view such a divine worship, he would certainly say, (as *St. Paul* speaks) *were we not mad?* While with amazement he beheld one man paying his reverence to an infinite Majesty *sitting*, another expressing the same reverence (forsooth) with his hat on his head;

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head; postures, which pass for affront and contumely, even in our addresses to an earthly superior.

But let the doctrine, discipline, and rituals of the church of *England* be searched to the bottom by rational and impartial heads, and then let them, if they please, produce any thing justly offensive to a conscience tender, not to the degree of *rebellion*. God will one day reckon with us for the church-privileges we enjoy, and for our religion, which is unquestionably the best, the purest, and the most primitive in the world; how ill soever it has been used by some, who were concerned upon more accounts than one to encourage it. In this respect therefore, our case falls in with the *Jews*, that God has vouchsafed both them and us the greatest of blessings, the richest and most improveable of talents, even a pure, a clear, and an uncorrupted religion. God's regard to which (for aught I know) was the chief, if not the only, cause of the *mercy* we commemorate this day.

2. As God planted his vineyard with this so generous a plant, so he was not wanting to refresh and influence it with the continual dews of his mercy, and the showers of his choicest blessings. The miracles of *Egypt*, and the *Red Sea*, the *Jews* frequent deliverances from

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from captivity, from the insolence of the *Philistines* and the *Midianites*, and from the scourge of nations, the *Assyrians*, were enough not only to have *argued*, but even to have *shamed* them into the highest returns of gratitude and obedience.

And has not God dealt as mercifully and as gloriously with these three nations? So that we are an island not only encompassed with a *sea of waters*, but also surrounded with an *ocean of mercies*. From the day that God first vouchsafed us the settlement of the reformed religion under the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, how has he been like a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, both to guide and protect us in the profession of it? For can we forget the deliverance of 88, and those victorious mercies more *invincible*, than the *Armada* design'd to invade and enslave us; when the *seas and winds* had a command from heaven to fight under the *English* colours, and to manifest the *strength* of God in our *weakness*? Or can we pass over that never to be forgot blessing of this day, which brought to light those hidden and fatal works of darkness, that would have ruined both King and Church, and the three Estates at a blow; when that God, who humbles himself enough in beholding what is done *upon* the earth, was pleased to stoop yet lower,

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and to behold what was *doing under* it too; and so by a mature providence, stepping in between the match and the fatal train; to *catch* us, as it were *a brand out of the fire*; or rather, by the greater mercy of prevention, to keep the destructive element from kindling upon us; and thereby to give us both an opportunity and obligation of eternally celebrating the mercy of such a glorious rescue from a plot, in all the parts of it so black and hideous, that the sober papists themselves ever did, and do, and I believe ever will, profess an utter abhorrence of it, how ready soever they may be to repeat it.

But the divine mercy has not took up here; it has delivered us from a blacker and a greater calamity; a calamity, the memory of which has even *blown up the gun-powder treason itself*; I mean the late horrid and for ever accursed rebellion, contrived, acted, and carried on by persons and principles worse, and more destructive to monarchy, than those of the papists. For the crowns of *Spain* and of *France* thrive and flourish, for all the popish religion settled in those kingdoms: but the sanctify'd actors of our late confusions were such as tore the crown from the King's head, and his head from his shoulders, and would, upon the same advantages, undoubtedly do the same again.

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The least finger of Fanaticism bearing harder and heavier upon monarchy, than the whole loins of Popery : God deliver us from both !

Now surely by these miraculous instances of mercy, God would fain provoke us to such a degree of piety, as might prevent his justice from consigning us over to a relapse into the same sad effects of the same sins. For can we think, that God detected and dashed the conspiracy of this day, only to enable the sons of luxury and ingratitude perpetually to *conspire* against him ? Did he break the neck of the late rebellion, that we might transcribe their actings towards their *King* into our behaviour towards *God* ? Did he deliver the sword into our hands, that we might thrust it into the bowels of his church ? Did he scatter all those antimonarchical sects of Presbytery, Independency, and Anabaptism, and other Fanaticks, by whatsoever names they stand *distinguished*, and (such is their good fortune) in a fair way *dignified* too ; I say, did he scatter all these locusts, that we might court their return, recall our old plagues, and fall back into our former *Cromwellian* confusions ? If this be our lot, we must charge our misery upon none but ourselves : for God would have delivered, nay, actually has delivered us, but it seems

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even in spite of providence and mercy itself we are resolved not to be *delivered*.

3. The third course of God's dealing with the persons here complained of in the text, was by judgments. It is possible, that the most generous of plants, fix'd in the richest soil, and visited with the kindest and most benign influence of sun and weather, may yet not fructify, till they are pruned and cut, and rid of those superfluous branches and suckers, which steal and intercept that juice and sap, which, according to the prime intention of nature, should pass into fruit. And therefore the great husbandman of souls takes this course with his spiritual vines, to add the pruning-hook of his judgments to the more gentle manurings of his mercy; and when *watering* will not do, to *dig about* them. And it is his last course; after which, if they still continue barren, comes the sentence of extirpation, positive and irreverfible, *cut them down, why cumber they the ground?*

Now that God has not been wanting to endeavour our reduction and fertility by these means also, we can call in many great and sad experiences to attest. For not to mention the sun of mercy, almost as soon as risen in the first reformation of religion, presently setting again in blood in the cruel reign of Queen Mary;

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Mary ; nor yet to mention the festivity of almost every succeeding Prince's coronation, presently followed by a dismal sweeping plague ; as if sent purposely to upbraid us with the mortality of our joys, by casting so sudden a cloud over our triumphs, and dashing our *wine with our own tears* : I say, not to insist upon these more remote instances of the divine judgments, let us cast our eyes upon those latter ones, much surpassing all the former. And here we shall see three kingdoms for some years bleeding by an unnatural civil war, weltring in their own blood, and wasted and spoiled by the fury of their own inhabitants. A calamity so universal, that, like a deluge, it involved all sorts, estates, and conditions of men ; from the prince to the peasant ; from him that wielded the sceptre, to him that held the plough. And this war we shall find concluded with the success of the rebel-cause and army ; which in the midst of peace continued upon the kingdom all the miseries of war ; acting all the cruelties of banishments, imprisonments, sequestrations and decimations, upon all those, that durst own the least loyalty to their Prince, or affection to the Church.

And when it pleased Providence to blow over this storm in the happy restoration of both, it was not long, before the destroying Angel

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stretch'd forth his hand over us in that woful mortality, caused by a spreading devouring sickness, that ceased not to destroy and mow down thousands before it, without stay or stop; till at length it gave over (as it were) out of very weariness with killing.

And when we were still unconcerned after all these blows, falling so thick and heavy upon us; a fire more dreadful than all, breaks forth upon the metropolis and glory of our nation, the great magazine of our strength and riches, and makes as great a mortality of houses, as the sickness had made of inhabitants.

And, lastly, when the growing impiety of the nation had baffled this judgment also, and brought us out of this fiery furnace with all our *dress still about us*, God commissions the enemy; the enemy, whom he had so often delivered into our hands, to come and out-brave us at our very doors, and to fire those ornaments and bulwarks of our *English* nation even under our noses. A disgrace and a blot upon us not to be fetch'd out by the fire that burnt them, nor to be wash'd off by the whole ocean that carried them: and it is well, that there followed not a *destruction* greater than the *disgrace*.

We

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We have seen and felt, what an angry God can do: and if we still sin on, and make new judgments necessary, so that God can neither *fire*, nor *plague*, nor *fight* us by *sea* or *land* out of our sins; what can be expected but that he, who hitherto has been only a *correcting*, should, in the next place, be a *consuming fire*?

Having thus shewn, how God dealt with his *people*, his *vineyard*, and his beloved *inheritance*, namely, by *instruction*, by *mercies*, and by *judgments*, (so that he might well make good this his saying, *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done?*) and withal having shewn, how parallel to those, his proceedings with us have been; let us now come to see, how both of us have dealt with God by way of return.

Three things the text remarks of them.

1. Great injustice and oppression, in verse 7.
2. Great rapacity and covetousness, in verse 8.
3. Great luxury and sensuality, in verses 11, 12.

1. And first, God charges them with *injustice and oppression*; though a sin of all others least to be expected from them, that they, who had so lately groan'd under the rod of oppression, should presently turn oppressors

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themselves ; and that in the most cruel and inhuman instances of it, *neither judging the cause of the fatherless, nor supporting the widow* ; as this prophet tells them in chap. i. verse 23. It seems no plea *sub formâ pauperis* could thrive or succeed in their courts: they had no commiseration for those who had suffered the same bondage and captivity, and smarted under the same tyranny with themselves.

We have had mercies, indeed great and glorious in his Majesty's restoration : but have those been any gainers by the deliverance, who were the greatest losers by the war ? No, (in a far different sense from that of the Scripture) *to him only, that has, shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly*. But if a man's loyalty has stript him of his estate, his interest, or relations, then, like the lame man at the pool of *Bethesda*, *every one steps in before him*.

We keep days of thanksgiving for our deliverance from the powder-plot, and for his Majesty's return, and the like; but do these experiments of God's goodness to us provoke ours to our brethren ; our loyal, suffering, undone brethren ? to whom the greatest *kindness* had been but the strictest *justice*. But such have been our methods of treating them, that we must expect the same declaration, that God makes in verse 7. *That he looked for judgment,*

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ment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry; and it is well, if it prove not a cry to heaven for vengeance.

2. The second thing here charged by God upon his ungrateful people was their abominable *covetousness*. Every one (says the Prophet, *Isa. i. 23.*) *loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards*: and here again he charges them *for joining house to house, and field to field*; and that deservedly, for the usual way of mens doing so, is by their joining sin to sin, and extortion to extortion. A course equally offensive to God, and grievous to man: it being no more possible, that a nation should flourish, when the wealth of it is grasped into a few haands; than that the body should thrive, when the nutriment due to all the parts of it is gathered into two or three swelling wens or impostems. The imputation of covetousness, I well know, makes a great and a tragical noise, when it is maliciously and falsely cast upon a certain sort and profession of men, who (God knows) for much the greatest part of them have scarce any thing to be *covetous* of. But surely this is far more likely to be found amongst those, who can raise great estates and families out of nothing, and transmit the fruits of their sin and rapine to their posterity.

How

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How much covetousness endangered this nation even in reference to this very business of the powder-treason, those words of King *James* sufficiently demonstrate; who considering, how far the conspiracy had gone, and how near we were to ruin, and how narrowly we escaped it, is reported to have said, with some heat, but more reason, *That this horrid plot might have been earlier discovered, had not some of his officers loved their money, or their own persons, much more than their country.* And the truth is, considering how gross the action was, being a conveyance of so much wood, and so many barrels to such a certain place, adding withal the number of the persons engaged in the plot, it is a miracle, it was not search'd into, and found out before. I am sure upon this and many other accounts, we have cause to adore the truth of that divine aphorism of that eminent Prelate and great Martyr, both for King and Church, Archbishop *Laud*, who lived and acted up to all that he said, even to the sealing it with his last blood : *The Lord (says he) deliver us from covetous and fearful men : the covetous will betray us for money, the fearful for security.*

3. And lastly, the third thing charged by God upon those unworthy persons spoken of in the text, was their excessive *luxury* and *sensuality* ;

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fuality; pursued by them even to the degree of a trade, or a profession: for in the 11th verse of this 5th chapter we have them *rising up early, and sitting up late at their cups*; such painful and laborious drunkards were they; and to the clattering of their cups we have the additional musick of the *harp and viol* in the 12th verse, where we find them feasting and gratifying all their senses, till they had utterly silenced their reason; and, which is the natural consequent of voluptuousness, wholly abandoned all thoughts of Providence: as it is in the same verse; *not regarding the work of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands.*

It is like, they might spend their time as many amongst us do now-a-days, in dressing and adorning themselves, in preparing for the great and weighty work of balls and dances, and then in shewing their little wit by scoffing at God, and Goodness, and all Religion.

But did God vouchsafe such transcendent blessings either to them, or us, only to be improved into the food and fuel of intemperance? Did God keep off our enemies by sea and land, that we might *compass both* to satisfy our unruly appetites? There have been rumours and fears of *French* armies, but they are the *French* fashions, and the *French* vices, that have invaded, and conquered, and spoiled

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our land; while every one almost makes this his sole business, employment and glory, to do wickedly, and to *fare deliciously every day*: a trade which is sure to go on apace, though all others languish and decay.

Such surely are neither the persons, nor practices, that moved God to do such great things for us; who fills no man's coffers, only to furnish him out in every new vain dress, or ridiculous fashion. For, as *St. Paul* says, *does God take care for oxen?* So we may be sure, that much less does he take such care for *apes and monkeys*, for *goats and swine*; for such as are good for nothing, but either mimically to imitate their neighbours fooleries, or to immerse themselves in all kind of lascivious and debauched living. But if these be the courses we are resolved upon, we should do well to strike this and such other festival days of public deliverance out of our *Rubrick*, which stands there only to *blush* for our guilt, and upbraid us for our ingratitude.

Thus at length I have given you some account of the grounds of that loud and heavy complaint here commenced by God himself against his peculiar darling people. Namely, *their unworthy unsuitable returns made to God's dealings with them*; that when he endeavoured to inform and guide them with the word of his

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his eternal truth, to endear them with his mercies, and to discipline and reclaim them with his judgments; they were so incorrigible and even impenetrable by all these methods, that they let loose the reins to all the filth and baseness, that the corruption of their nature could ingulph them in; defying heaven with their clamorous oppressions, burdening the earth with their rapines and extortions; and lastly, abusing themselves and all the good creatures of God with their insatiable luxury and intemperance.

And now if we think, that the injured *goodness of God could*, after all this, satisfy itself with bare complaints, we may conclude, that it had something else to complain of besides their wickedness, even his own *justice*; which was too far concerned to put up such provocations, without much another kind of revenging the injuries done to his *abused mercy*. And therefore we have God here come to his final resolution; namely, to destroy and ruin those vile persons; which is the sad issue and consequent of the foregoing complaint, and the

4. And last thing proposed by us to be handled. This dreadful proceeding of God with them, we have fully set down in the fifth and sixth verses, *And now go to, (says God) I will tell you, what I will do to my vineyard;*

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I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down, and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up briers and thorns; I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it. In a word, he would utterly bereave them of all their defences, and expose them to all the miseries of a defenceless condition.

Now the defences of a nation are twofold :

1. Its *laws* : 2. Its *military force*. In the destruction of both of which, history tells us how miserably the *Jewish* nation suffered, till at length overpower'd with continual invasions, their common-wealth and government was quite dissolved.

1. And first for their laws, (which in every government are as the sinews and nerves, binding together all the parts and members of the body politick) the execution of them amongst the *Jews* was at length wholly neglected; so that they stood only to upbraid the weakness of the magistrate, and as trophies of a victorious reigning impiety, much too strong for them: which laws, had they had their full course and career, must have born down all disorder before them, and made *judgment run down like a river, and righteousness like a mighty stream*. But they by new unheard-of methods
of

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of policy set themselves only to suppress their laws, and to secure themselves by the rotten short arts of connivance, winking at the grossest disorders so long, till they had even *wink'd* themselves blind; and indulged wickedness into that bulk and height, that over-topping authority, and scorning all controul, it was itself only a *law to itself*.

2. And then in the next place, this introduced a dissolution of their military power; no persons ever growing into a fitness for war under a licentious and ungoverned peace: whereupon we find them run down by every potent adversary. The *Assyrians*, the *Egyptians*, the *Persians*, the *Grecians*, and the *Romans*, all successively vanquished and enslaved them.

And then they found, that neither their insulting over their poor brethren, *their joining house to house*, nor their *chanting to the harp and viol*, *their merry-meetings and profuse feasting*, *their gawdy dresses*, and *damning oaths*, could enable them to look an active, hardy, and resolved enemy in the face.

And now as the walls and safeguard of a nation are, its *laws and military force*, so upon a failure of them ensue two fatal and destructive evils.

1. A growth of sects and factions; for as soon as God had pull'd up the hedge of his
vine-

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vineyard, we find it in the sixth verse of this chapter over-run with *briers* and *thorns*; things not only useless, but hurtful; such as instead of refreshing or feeding the husbandman, only rend and tear his flesh; and not content only to grow, will at length aspire also to govern; it being natural to the vilest *bramble*, to affect *royalty and supremacy*.

The *Jewish* church and nation was at length pestered with *Pharisees*, *Sadducees*, *Herodians*, and *Essenians*, all rending the unity of the church, and troubling the peace of the state, much like that rabble of sects and names now-a-days amongst us, the blessed effect of the late *bloody reformation*; which, how they swarm, and to what a languishing condition they have brought this once flourishing kingdom, every judicious person sees, and every pious laments. And, which is the greatest mischief of all, we still take pretences of *conscience* for current from those, who had conspired and rebell'd against the government, murdered one king, and banished another, and to this day have not declared the least repentance for any of all those things, which they have done. But since our physicians think the best way of *curing* a disease is to *pamper it*, the lord in mercy prepare the kingdom to suffer, what he by miracle only can prevent.

2. The

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2. The other mischief consequent upon God's pulling down the wall of his vineyard, was its being *trodden down*. It was first to be choak'd up by a growing evil from within, and next to be laid waste by a force from abroad: The non-execution of laws caused the first, and the failure of power occasioned the next. How deep the *Jews* drank of this cup, has been already hinted; even till the whole nation was *drunk with God's fury*: and if so, could any thing prepare them for, and expose them to a more dreadful fall; and yet they had the experience of as great mercies from God, as ever this day produced to *England*; and I am confident they *did not* (because indeed they *could not*) *abuse them more*.

Now what rational ground we can have to presume upon greater kindness and forbearance, than God vouchsafed his own *vineyard*, I believe, it will pose any of us to tell. We have lived under a long *sunshine*, and, God knows, that it has *ripened* our sins apace. Nor have the judgments used by him been hitherto able to reduce us; though they have been so various, that now there remains not many more behind; but yet those, which do remain, are such, that if God brings them upon us, they will indeed leave no work for any more. In the mean time it is surely our

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grand concernment to prevent the divine justice, before the last and fatal sentence goes out against us; and so breaking off our crying national sins by a commensurate national repentance to reconcile ourselves to our *great judge*; even that *judge*, who has mercy for relenting sinners, but repays the obstinate, and *those who hate him, to their face.*

*To whom therefore be rendred and ascribed,
as is most due, all praise, might, majesty,
and dominion, both now and for evermore.
Amen.*

The

*The Nature, Causes, and Consequences
of Envy.*

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The Nature, Causes, and Consequences
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SERMON X.

The Nature, Causes, and Consequences of Envy.

JAMES iii. 16.

For where Envy and Strife is, there is Confusion and every evil Work.

OF the sins and ill qualities that the corruption of man's nature has poisoned and polluted his mind with, there is none of greater malignity and baseness than envy. For the condemnation of which we need not bring it to the bar of religion and christianity; there being enough to sentence and condemn it from bare reason and philosophy.

For the prosecution of the words, I shall do these four things.

1. I shall shew, what envy is, and where in the nature of it does consist.

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2. What are the grounds and causes of it.

3. What are its effects and consequences.

And,

4. Lastly, make some use and improvement of the whole. And,

1. For the first of these ; what envy is, and wherein the nature of it does consist. And for this we shall find, that moralists generally give us this description of it ; *that it is a depraved affection or passion of the mind, disposing a man to hate or malign another for some good or excellency belonging to him, which the envious person judges him unworthy of, and which for the most part he wants himself.* Or yet more briefly ; *envy is a certain grief of mind conceived upon the sight of another's felicity, whether real or supposed :* so that we see that it consists partly of *hatred*, and partly of *grief*. In respect of which two passions, and the proper actings of both, we are to observe, that as it shews itself in *hatred*, it strikes at the person *envied* ; but as it affects a man in the nature of *grief*, it recoils, and does execution upon the envier ; both of them are hostile affections, and vexatious to the breast, which harbours them. Acts of *love* indeed have naturally something of pleasure still attending them, and please the mind, while they proceed from it. But no man perfectly enjoys himself, while he hates another ;
hatred

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hatred being a quality, that sours the whole soul, and puts all the faculties of it (as it were) into a posture of *offence*. It is really war begun, and commonly so, before it is proclaimed; it gives the first charge, and strikes the first stroke in all acts of hostility. And can there be any thing of enjoyment in all this? A battle certainly can be no present pleasure, though it should end in a victory. And during a man's actual pursuit of his hatred, he is much in the same condition, restless and unquiet; his head contriving, and his hands laying about them to do the hated person all the mischief he can: in a word, he lives in the fire, fighting and fencing, and forced to carry on a constant opposition. For hatred being too active and mercurial a passion to lie still, never takes up with the bare theory of mischief, with sluggish thoughts and secret grudges, but, as opportunity serves, will certainly be *doing*; and till such opportunity falls in with it (which frequently it does not) it must needs afflict, and grate, and feed upon the man himself, and make him as miserable, as he wishes others.

And thus *hatred* having done its part towards the disturbance of the mind, in which it is, the other passion of *grief* is hereupon presently set on work: for when any of the

other passions are defeated about their respective objects or operations, then this passion immediately comes upon the stage, and takes its turn to act. So that, when a man cannot vent his rage outwardly, he is sure to grieve and mourn, and bleed inwardly; like a wretch falling on his own sword, because he cannot thrust it into the body of his enemy. This is the nature of envy, always exerting itself in and by these two afflicting passions; first, in the way of hatred carrying its mischievous influence abroad, and then in the way of grief playing the tyrant at home; but whether in the one or in the other, guilt and sadness are its inseparable companions: it being utterly impossible upon all principles both of nature and religion, for an envious person to have either a good conscience or a chearful mind.

But to shew the malignity of this ill quality yet farther, it is observable, that in all or most of the other passions of the mind, there is, as to the general nature of them, an indifference to good or evil; as being, under that consideration, determin'd to neither. Thus, for instance, we find it, in the forementioned affections of *grief* and *hatred*, taken singly and by themselves; and likewise in *fear*, *anger*, *despair*, and the like; of all which there is none but what may be lawful in the respective

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tive actings of each, provided they pitch upon right objects, and proceed in a due manner: for a man may *grieve*, *hate*, *fear*, be *angry*, and *despair* of the accomplishment of this or that design, without transgressing any of the rules of morality. So that there may be such things as an honest *grief*, *hatred*, *fear*, *anger* and *despondency* (as we have said,) if duly placed and directed; but notwithstanding all this, there can be no such thing in nature as an *honest and a lawful envy*; but it is intrinsically evil, and imports in it an essential obliquity, not to be taken off or separated from it. For though I have shewn, that envy was made up of *hatred* and *grief*, and have since also affirmed, that these two affections may be good and lawful in their respective actings; yet we are to remember, that this is so only, when they act singly, and withal upon due objects; but (when by being combined together, and pitched upon a wrong object, they both make up the passion of envy,) they then receive thereby such a different *formality* and *nature*, as stamps them absolutely evil, and that so unchangeably such, as no consideration or circumstances whatsoever can possibly render them otherwise; which shews, and proves too, an original necessary disagreeableness between envy and the soul of man: for

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nothing can agree with this, which consists not with its *innocence*; and for a man to be *envious* and *innocent* too, is contradictory and impossible. And this, by the way, will serve also to demonstrate to us, what affections of passions are natural to the soul of man, and what is unnatural. And thus much for the nature of envy, shewing, what it is, and wherein it does consist. I proceed now to the

Second thing proposed, *viz.* to shew, *what are the grounds and causes of envy*; and these are twofold.

1. Either on the part of the person *envying*.
Or,

2. On the part of the person *envied*.

And first for those of the first sort, we may reckon these.

1. Great malice and baseness of nature. In which I am forced to use a general word, not being able to give it a particular and more expressive name. But the thing, which I mean and design by it, is such a temper of mind, as makes men for the most part love mischief for mischief's sake; and though they serve no real interest, and reap no advantage by the hurt they do, yet it is so peculiarly suitable to their ill-nature and constitution to do and to wish it, that the work itself is its own wages and reward. Just as it is observed in some
beasts

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beasts of prey; which, having filled their ravenous appetites, so that hunger can prompt them to no farther cruelty, yet, out of mere savageness, shall tear and destroy, whatsoever they meet with, and take pains to kill, tho' they leave it presently, when they have done.

It is a common saying, that there is no disputing of the reason of facts: for as much as each man's particular fancy and humour determine him to like this, and dislike that: and so it is in the pleasures of the mind; some men affect this, and wonder that others hate it; and they on the other side wonder as much, that any one can hate, what they so much love. But as philosophy teaches, that all wonder springs from an ignorance of the causes of things; so this proceeds from a particular inexperience, and want of observing matters of daily occurrence. In which we shall see many things, of which we can give no clear account, or reason, from the common principles of human nature: but they seem to be some of those irregular monstrous productions, which the general corruption of it preternaturally shoots out into; and which not keeping the stated course and road of human nature, must not be measured by the usual actings and inclinations of it. Which being so, why should he, whose temper

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per inclines him to be gentle, candid, and beneficial to all, who come within his converse, be at all surprized to find another fierce, malicious, and shrewd to every one, whom he has to do with; any more than a dove, which feeds upon corn and other seeds, should wonder that a crow, or a raven, can feed so heartily upon carrion? For every particular temperament has its particular pleasure. And the mind of a *Nero* will make him hiss, and sing, and play, and enjoy himself as much in beholding the bravest city in the world all in a flame, as others could rejoice at the sight of a triumph, and the glories of a victory.

Now this is the reason, that some dispositions do really delight themselves in mischief; and love to see all men about them miserable. It is that *ἐπιχαίροντία* (as the *Greeks* call it) that vile quality that makes them laugh at a cross accident, and feast their eyes and their thoughts with the sight of any great calamity: and indeed (morally speaking) they cannot do otherwise. It is meat and drink to them to see others starve; and their own clothes seem then to sit warmest upon them, when they behold others ready to perish with nakedness and cold; like *Ætna*, never hotter, than when surrounded with snow. Now this disposition, this blessed, humane, christian disposition, (to express

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press a thing contrary to nature by words, as contrary to itself) is the very *groundwork and first-foundation* stone of envy.

2. The second ground or cause of envy is an unreasonable grasping ambition. For the design of the envious person is not only to obtain, but to engross all honour and greatness to himself. He thinks he can never trade to his advantage, unless he can have the monopoly of every thing he values. Other kinds of ambition indeed will hardly brook any thing above them, but this *envious ambition* will endure nothing considerable about it. It is remarked of *Alexander* as a very great fault, and (in truth) of that nature, that one would wonder how it could fall upon so great a spirit; namely, that he would sometimes carp at the valorous achievements of his own captains. *Suæ demptum laudi existimans, quicquid cessisset alienæ*, says the historian: because he thought, that whatsoever praise was bestowed upon another, was took from him. A great meanness certainly; and enough to make the conqueror himself as much the object of mens pity, as his conquests could be of their envy.

Now this is directly the temper of the envious person, whose ambition is not merely ambition, but an odd compound of ambition and covetousness too: for he would have all

to himself, and not so much as a good word must fall beside him; so that whatsoever commendation is given to another, is look'd upon as an invasion of his property, and a reproach to his person: and to do any thing excellent or praise-worthy, is to pass an affront upon him not to be put up. And therefore he bids the whole world (as it were) stand off, while he alone puts himself upon every publick performance, catches at every occasion of popularity, and thrusts himself into every man's business; he *puffs*, and he *blows*, and he *swells*, as if the whole world were not enough to afford him elbow-room; for it will not content such an one to be the *prime*, unless he be also the *only man*. In a word, he would needs be *every thing*, did not the same ill quality certainly make him fit for *nothing*.

But then, if this temper comes also to be back'd with interest and power, and the favour of great ones, how grievous and intolerable is it to all persons of modesty and sobriety? What a bluster does it make in all places? Such an one lives in the world like a continual storm, blowing down all before him: and men (better than himself) must be willing to lie prostrate under his feet, and account it an honour (forsooth) to be trampled upon, and made a pedestal only for him to get up by and ride.

But

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But surely it concerns all well-wishers to society to oppose and pursue such an one, as they would a wild boar, for his design is the same, which is to waste, and spoil, and forage all that is about him. Society neither shall, nor can be saved by the parts and virtues of others, till such an obstacle to both be stript of all power, and removed out of the way; who is to the body politic, like an enormous excrescence, or great wen to the natural; drawing the proper aliment and juice of all the parts to itself, and so feeding upon and supporting itself by the bane and ruin of the whole. Now this disposition may pass for a second ground of envy.

3. Another cause of envy is an inward sense of a man's own weakness and inability to attain, what he desires, and would aspire to. I do not say, that *envy* universally and always proceeds from hence, or supposes this for the cause of it, but generally and for the most part it does: nor does this carry in it the least contrariety to what I said before, in making ambition one of the causes of envy; for upon a due estimate of the qualities, that affect the mind of man, we shall find, that no minds are weaker than the haughty and ambitious; much like the uppermost branches of trees;

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trees, lofty, but slight, and much more easily broke, than those which they overtop.

Now nothing stirs up envy more, than a despair of being what the envied person is; and that despair is founded upon a man's consciousness of his not being able to reach the same pitch of perfection: and this consciousness sticks so close to the mind, that for all a man's flattering himself, and his boasting to others, yet he can neither *boast*, nor *flatter* it away; but that it is a perpetual check to his spirits, and will be sure to keep him under in the inmost judgment he passes upon himself. Some have observed, that there is no creature whatsoever, but by a kind of natural instinct knows its match; and, no doubt, by consequence its superior and overmatch too. And when a man knows this, by an impartial comparison of himself with his rival (the inward apprehensions of the soul being generally impartial and true, what disguise soever they may put on in mens carriage and expressions,) upon such a comparison, I say, he sinks and sneaks inwardly; and weighing himself in the balance with the other, quickly sees which scale rises, and which falls. Sight and sense are his conviction; and in such cases men seldom or never dissemble with themselves. And this inward intimate sense of a man's own impotence,

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potence, I affirm to be one ground of envy; and a principal one too. In a word, a man is envious, because his desires are vast and immoderate, and he finds them cramp'd and stinted by the bounds which nature has put to his abilities. He would fain rise, but he finds something within that pulls him back, and stakes him down; and therefore he casts an evil eye upon others, because he finds such *poor entertainment* for it in himself.

4. The fourth and last cause of envy that I shall assign, is *idleness*; for this often makes men envy the high offices, honours and accomplishments of others. They will not be at the pains to fit themselves for preferment, and yet malign those who have it for their fitness, and owe that fitness to their pains. No, they would lie still and be great, sleep or play and be learned. Honours and dignities must come to their bed-side, wait the time of their rising (forsooth) and even court their acceptance. But Nature and Providence has cast the course of things much otherwise; and honour and greatness will wait upon none, but such as first wait upon them; which men must not think to do by lazing and sleeping: for as wisdom generally brings men to honour, so study and labour must bring them to wisdom, and the way to be wise is to consult their pil-

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low less. Industry, for the most part, opens the way to preferment, but always to improvement; and it is the sweat of the brow that entitles it to the laurel. And therefore *Caius Marius*, a person of a plebeian extraction, but one, who, by his valour and labour, had made himself the envy of the *Roman* nobility, defends himself against them in his speech to the people with great reason. *Invident* (says he) *honori meo; ergo invideant labori, innocentiae, periculis etiam meis, quoniam per hæc illum cepi*. In like manner, one man perhaps envies another's greatness, or reputation; but why then does he not also envy his labour, his abstinence, his night-watches, and all his other severities, which were the proper ways and means by which he acquired it. If men would be but true to themselves in employing their parts, their time and opportunities, they would probably have no provocation to envy their superiors; for this would be the direct way to keep them from having any, and to make them as great and eminent as the greatest. But their idle *hours*, or rather *years*, their cups and their sports, their gossiping visits and vain courtships, not suffering them to exert those faculties which God and nature had endowed them with, are the only things that keep them low; and being so, they look upon such as ascend, and

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and get into a region above them, like so many black clouds riding over their heads, and by a dark and malign shade always obscuring and eclipsing them ; tho' the true cause of all such eclipses is from men themselves standing in their own light.

But because I have stated envy upon idleness as one cause of it, we ought by all means to note the difference between envy and emulation ; which latter is a brave and a noble thing, and quite of another nature, as consisting only in a generous imitation of something excellent ; and that such an imitation as scorns to fall short of its copy, but strives, if possible, to outdo it. The emulator is impatient of a superior, not by depressing or maligning another, but by perfecting himself. So that while that sottish thing envy sometimes fills the whole soul, as a great dull fog does the air ; this on the contrary inspires it with a new life and vigour, whets and stirs up all the powers of it to action. And surely that which does so (if we also abstract it from those heats and sharpnesses that sometimes by accident may attend it) must needs be in the same degree lawful and laudable too, that it is for a man to make himself as useful and accomplish'd as he can.

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Having thus shewn the causes of envy on the part of him that *envies*, let us in the next place see the causes of it on his part also that is envied. Where, in the first place, we are to observe, that it is always caused by something either *good* or *great*; for no man is envied for his failures, but his perfections. Envy sucks poison out of the fairest and the sweetest flowers, and, like an ill stomach, converts the best nutriment into the worst and rankest humours. So that if we would give in an exact catalogue of all the motives of envy, we must reckon up all the several virtues, ornaments and perfections, both internal and external, that the nature of man is capable of being ennobled with. But I shall only mention some of the principal: as,

1. Great abilities and endowments of nature.
2. The favour of princes and great persons.
3. Wealth, riches and prosperity. And,
4. And lastly, a fair credit, esteem and reputation in the world. And,

1st, For the first of these; *great natural parts and abilities* usually provoke men's envy. God is pleased to send some into the world better furnished, and more liberally endowed with the gifts of nature than others, with a quicker
 appre-

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apprehension, a farther and a deeper reach, and generally a greater fitness for business and affairs than others; which qualifications, as they set them above the common level of mankind, so they make them to be malign'd and struck at by most below them; for let a man stand never so low, he can yet shoot at him that stands higher; much as it is with the lower parts of the world, the earth, and the sea, which not being able to vye with the upper and nobler parts of it, the heavens, for brightness, quit scores with them at least by obscuring them with mists and exhalations.

Envy makes a man think another of greater faculties only a continual blemish to himself. He thinks his candle cannot shine in the presence of the other's sun; that is in truth, he is angry with God for not making him better, and wiser, and stronger. He expostulates the supposed injuries of his creation, and questions his Maker for not coming up to his measures. For while envy spits its venom directly at men, much of it falls obliquely upon God himself; and while it quarrels with the effects of his goodness towards others, does by consequence blaspheme the cause.

So that we see how it strikes both at God and man with the same blow; in which, tho' God will be sure to maintain his own honour,

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yet it is seldom in the power of men to secure theirs; many having had but too frequent and sad cause to complain of the very bounties of nature towards them, that it made them too excellent to be safe and happy: so hard is it for any one to keep what another thinks it his interest to take away; according to that man's case, who, while he was rescuing from being drowned, had a ring spied upon his *finger*, which quickly procured him another death.

2. A second provocative of mens envy is the *favour of princes and great persons*; which yet, one would think, no envy should presume to controul. For the grace of God, and the favour of Princes, are absolute and unaccountable, and so far from being founded upon merit, that for the most part they serve instead of it, and are never more liberal than where they find none at all. Princes claim a sovereignty in their affection, as well as in their office and condition.

Nevertheless envy will be interposing its thwarting countermanding power even here also, shutting up the breasts, and tying up the hands of Princes; so that they must neither give nor do any thing but by law, and envy must give that law. Whereupon, if a Prince casts an eye of favour upon any person of worth,

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worth, and parts, and fitness for publick service, if such an one commences *favourite* one day, envy shall vote him an *evil counsellor* the next; and then the publick good, and the rights of the subject, run all presently to wreck, till the envious person steps into his place. Merit is an unpardonable piece of popery, with respect to men as well as to God, and to the rewards of this world, as well as of the next.

But if on the other side a Prince shall think fit to cast his eye downwards, and by the shine and warmth of his favour, draw up some earthy ignoble vapour to the upper region, and there make it glister like a star; Envy shall never cease till it brings this down also: and then though it is a pleasure to most eyes to view a star falling, yet none look after it when it is fallen.

So that we see, that whether sovereignty would serve itself by preferring men of sufficiency, or divert and sport itself by advancing men of none; Envy equally protests, and plants its engines against both; neither allowing sovereign rulers (who yet are men, and sometimes not without the infirmities of men) meet helps, and ministers to govern by, nor so much as an illustrious *Simpleton* sometimes to refresh themselves with, which is very hard, and severe usage certainly: especially since it

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has been always look'd upon as one of the most allowed uncontested royalties of Princes to make their will the sole rule and reason of their kindness, to dispense their benefactions as they please; and in a word, to be as free and arbitrary as fortune herself, by bestowing their favours upon such as *she usually bestows hers*; not the wisest always in the world.

3. A third ground or motive of envy is from the *wealth, riches, or plenty of another*. No man willingly would be poor, and no envious person would have *another rich*; every one who is remarkably so, being commonly look'd upon but as a kind of *injury* to all the poor ones about him; not that he does or ever did them any injury, but that by being rich, he is reckoned one himself. For whosoever has a great deal to lay up, will be always an intolerable grievance to him, who has nothing to spend; and to look upon a full bag, and to have nothing to do with it, is no small mortification to such a one. The learned *Verulam* observes, that diseases arising from emptiness, are generally the most dangerous, and most hardly cured; and amongst the diseases of the mind, envy grounded upon domestick penury, is certainly of the same nature; especially where a neighbouring opulence shews what the remedy is, but not how it may be had;

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had; like the thirst of *Tantalus*, where the thing thirsted for was near enough, and yet out of reach too. And in such a case envy will be sure to work and boil up to a more than ordinary height; while the envious person frets, and raves, and swells at the plenties and affluence of his abounding neighbour, and (as I may so express it) is even ready to burst with another's *fulness*.

What made the devil (the grand exemplar of envy) so much malign *Job*, but the bounties of Providence to him in a large estate, great revenues, and a flourishing family, and all of them watched over and guarded by the wakeful eye and the powerful hand of him who gave them? And no doubt the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, with the rest of his good neighbours (who did such terrible execution upon all that belong'd to him) were acted and led on by the same Spirit. They could not brook the splendor and greatness of so potent, and (as they thought) over-grown a neighbour. He was an eye-sore to them upon the throne, but (for all his noisome *ulcers*) none at all when they saw him upon the dunghill.

What made that wretch *Ziba* accuse his lord and master to *David*? (a judge after *Ziba*'s own heart.) The accusation indeed charged treason upon *Mephibosheth*; but whatsoever

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the treason was, it was only his land, which was the traytor. For when his envious accuser had once swallowed that, the accusation was at an end presently; and *poor Mephibosheth* quickly became *innocent Mephibosheth*.

In fine, if the envious person be poor and beggarly, he would have all about him as ar-rant beggars as himself; but if rich, he would have all beggars *but himself*; like *Gideon's* fleece, filled with the dew of heaven, and every thing else dry about it: so that where-soever you see any one of a plentiful fortune, and large possessions, you are not at all to wonder if you also see such as are malign'd, en-vied, and pursued with all imaginable spite and rancour, by some pitiful male-content or other, who perhaps could never call so much land his own, as might serve to bury him *when dead*, and much less suffice to maintain him *while alive*. And it is too well known to all the world, not to be justly detested by it, that there is a certain profession of men, who shall never cease to be malign'd and per-secuted, while there is any thing of revenue, either to support the dignity of their function, or procure a common respect to their persons; but they shall be followed with all the odious, false, and base imputations of pride, covetous-ness, and luxury, still rattling about their ears,
and

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and whatsoever else the envy of a raging avarice, and a domineering insolence can belch out against them. But after all, I would gladly learn, wherein this monstrous pride and covetousness of the church shews itself. Why, in this, that the ministers of it are not yet cloathed in rags or sackcloth, that the church itself is neither for * *Naked Gospels*, nor naked Evangelists, and that her poor clergy can just (or very hardly) find enough to pay taxes, and other publick duties, and yet make a shift to keep themselves from quite starving, or begging afterwards. This, this is the pride and covetousness of our clergy. And then, lastly, for their luxury, that will be found (if at all) in their not being willing to lick the crumbs at the end of their rich neighbour's table, and much less under it; that they scorn to sneak here and there for a dinner, or go to *beg their daily bread* of any one, but of God himself.

This, I say, is the real and true account of all these loud and impudent clamours made by Envy and Atheism, Popery and Puritanism, against the *English* Clergy. And the truth is, that as long as that small remainder of land, belonging to the church, shall continue yet untorn

* See a vile book so entitled, and reflecting upon the clergy, though (to the shame of the author) written by a clergyman.

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torn from her, and as long as there shall be those about her (as there will ever be very many) who will never think, that they themselves *have enough*, the church and clergy of *England* shall always be inveighed against, and struck at, as having *too much*.

But, *fourthly*, the *fourth and last* grand motive and ground of envy, that I shall mention, is a man's having a fair reputation and name in the world; a thing, upon which envy has always a cross and malign aspect: though surely nothing in nature can be imagined less liable to any rational exception, than for a man of merit to be praised and commended, that is, to have a few good words sprinkled upon him without offence to any one; and that fame, which is nothing but *air* and *voice*, should not be able to raise such storms in any breast whatsoever. But experience has declared it much otherwise, and that some men can hear the applauses of none, but themselves, but with the utmost indignation and impatience; nay, so boundless and unreasonable are they, that they would even engross the vogue of the whole world, and confine the very popular breath, and unlimited, boundless freedom of men's tongues to their own persons. Such an one, perhaps, is hated by his neighbour to the very death. And what, I pray, may be his fault?

Why,

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Why, he is generally well spoken of, the world gives him the character of a virtuous, a just or a discreet person; and this the envious wretch thinks casts a dark shadow upon himself, who never reckons himself so fine, as when he plumes and decks himself with the spoils of his brother's reputation; and can refresh his base mind in all companies with malicious, reproachful stories of him; often repeating and improving what the malice of report has brought to him to be commented, and enlarged upon, by his own more malicious invention. Nay, that very worth and virtue, which deservedly draws after it the highest panegyricks from some, often proves matter of the bitterest satires from others: a very odd and strange thing, I confess; but envy will easily unriddle the strangeness, and take off the wonder. The due consideration of all which has founded the truth of a saying much more significant I own than believed, and more believed than practised; namely, that he of all men lives the safest, who lies the closest; and that none are so much out of the reach of the world as those, who are most out of the view of it too. For what is every step into the publick, but a farther advance into danger? an engaging in fresh troubles and contentions, and a drawing after one those eyes, which,
like

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like the basilisk, kill whatsoever they look upon, if but capable of worth enough *to be looked to death* by them. It is not safe for any one to be much commended, to be born upon the wings of fame, and ride in triumph upon the tongues of men; for the tongues of some do but provoke the teeth of more; and men we know do much more heartily detract, than they use to commend. And thus I have shewn four of the chief motives of envy; for I never pretended to recount or rip them up all: but yet if I should endeavour to make such an attempt, and to comprise them all in one general representation, I think I might very properly give it you in this one word; that every thing will make a man *to be envied*, which shall set him above being *pitied*.

I come now to the third general head proposed for the handling of the words, which is to shew the effects and consequences of envy, expressed by *confusion, and every evil work*.

The proper and grand effect then of envy, we see, is *confusion*; and this also is twofold, upon the account of a twofold relation. 1. To the envious man himself. And, 2. To those, who are envied and malign'd by him. And,

First of all, this ill quality brings confusion and calamity upon the *envious person* himself, who

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who cherishes and entertains it ; and, like the viper, gnaws out the bowels, which first conceived it. It is indeed the only act of justice that it does, that the guilt it brings upon a man it revenges upon him too, and so torments and punishes him much more, than it can afflict or annoy the person who is envied by him. We know, what the poet says of envy ; and it is with the strictest truth without the least *hyperbole*, that *Phalaris's* brazen bull, and all the arts of torment, invented by the greatest masters of them, the *Sicilian* tyrants, were not comparable to those, that the tyranny of envy wracks the mind of man with. For it ferments and boils in the soul, putting all the powers of it into the most restless and disorderly agitation. It lies at the heart like a worm, always gnawing and corroding, and piercing it with a secret invisible sting and poison ; it even changes the way of man's ordinary conversation, sours his behaviour, sharpens and envenoms his discourse, and very often proceeds so far as to leave its marks upon his very countenance, and the habit of his body, making that pale and pineing, of a ghastly look and a declining constitution : the livery which is heretofore bestowed upon *Brutus* and *Cassius*, a livery every way suited to the worthy service it had engaged those wretches in. And
now

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now does not this remarkably shew the peculiar unreasonableness and fottishness of this vice? For there are few other vices but prevail upon men upon the account of some supposed pleasure, as that they afford some short gratification to their sensuality, or at least bring with them something of profit or emolument; but he, who will be envious, can design nothing but to make himself miserable, because he sees another happy; he must resolve to be dejected and cast down, whensoever he sees his neighbour prosperous, and, as the poet describes envy, *ready to weep for this very cause, that she could see nothing to be wept at: Vixque tenet lacrymas, quia nil lacrymabile cernit.* We need not seek for arguments to dissuade a man from being envious upon the score of charity to his neighbour, but even of love and mercy to himself. Let him but be prevailed upon not to be his own tormentor, his own executioner, and his envy will be at an end. Let not his neighbour's rest break his *sleep*. Let not his friend's fortune, or reputation, make him out of love with himself, and neglect his own. For why may not I come in as a *sharer*, instead of being a maligner of his joy and felicity? for as much as there is a real pleasure in the congratulation of another's good; the very society of joy redoubling it: so that while it lights directly

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ly upon my friend, it rebounds upon myself; and the brighter his candle burns, the more easily will it light mine. Whensoever the *Romans* conquered an enemy, it was indeed the general himself only, who was said to triumph, but the whole army and all the people equally rejoiced. But the envious person will bear no part in the festivals of a publick mirth: he shuts himself up and snarls, while others laugh and sing. And if all the world were of this temper, it would be an uselefs (which yet has ever been accounted the noblest) property of good, that it naturally spreads and diffuses itself abroad. And therefore I shall say no more of such a person but this; that he, who maligns and envies others, is of all men living least to be envied himself.

In the next place, we are to consider the effects of envy; in respect of the object of it, or the person envied: and these may be reduced to the following three.

1. A busy, curious enquiry, or prying into all the concerns of the person envied and maligned: and this, no doubt, only as a step or preparative to those farther mischiefs, which envy assuredly drives at. For most certain it is, that no man enquires into another man's concerns, or makes it his business to acquaint himself with his privacies, but with a design

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to do him some shrewd turn or other. Such an eye is never idle, but always looking about to see, where a man lies open to a blow, and accordingly to direct the hand to take a sure stroke. It is withal an indefatigable teller and hearer of base stories. It is said of the priests and scribes (who bore so cruel an envy to our Saviour for the acceptance he found amongst the people) that they were almost continually sending forth spies, that they might catch him in his words, *Luke xx. 20.* And it is this blessed quality, forsooth, that so insinuates into families, that puts them upon hiring servants to betray their masters, and inveigling one friend, if possibly they can, to supplant another: it is this, that listens at doors and windows, that catches at every breath or whisper, that is stirring; so that it will concern the person envied, to be still upon his strictest guard, having an enemy so constantly upon the watch. Watching, for the most part, imports hostility; and no man observes the motions of his enemy, but that he may the more advantageously find a time to fight him. The eagle is a very sagacious bird, but a very devouring one too; and the quickness of its sight is only in order to the better seizing of its prey.

2. The second effect of envy, with reference to the envied person, is *calumny* or *detraction*.

We

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We have already seen the first effort made by it against him by an insidious diving into his most reserved and secret affairs, and the next to this always works out at the mouth; so that if a man cannot rival and overbear his neighbour by downright violence of action, he will attempt it at least by slander, and vilifying expressions; and that there may not want art, as well as malice, to carry on the attack more sure and home. Has a man done bravely, and got himself a reputation too great to be borne down by any base and direct aspersions? Why then envy will seemingly subscribe to the general vogue in many or most things; but then it will be sure to come over him again with a sly oblique stroke in some derogating [*but*] or other, and so slide in some scurvy exception, which shall effectually stain all his other virtues; and like the dead fly in the apothecary's ointment, which (*Solomon* tells us) never fails to give the whole an offensive savour. And, peradventure, to weave the dissimulation with yet a finer thread, and so to make it the more artificial, and less discernible, the disgrace shall be insinuated, and cast in with words of pity. As after a man has been commended in company for several good qualities and perfections, the sneaking envious wretch shall then put in, and seem to assent to every thing so spoken of

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him; but shall add withal, what an unhappiness is it, that a person endued with such accomplishments should be so unluckily surprized, as to be guilty of such or such actions? And that there should be any thing to allay or blemish the clearness of his reputation? When perhaps the rest of the company were either wholly ignorant of any such matter, had not his malicious ill-favoured *pity* brought it fresh into remembrance. This is the way, which envy takes to undermine a man's honour, when the universal vogue of men is on his side, and so makes art and caution necessary to support and fix the slander. But if a man be quite unknown, and his virtue has lain private and obscure, envy will then prevent, and be beforehand with such an one, loading him with direct impudent and downright lyes, and represent him as vile and infamous, as it would have him thought by all. So that, when he shall appear and step forth into the world, he shall find it prepossessed, and a mighty prejudice against him, for him to break through and conquer; a prejudice sown and cherished in mens minds by a long, a diligent, and malicious detraction. In which case, if it so falls out, as oftentimes it does, that what an envious tongue reports, a credulous ear drinks in and believes; but withal, conceals and hides from

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from the injured defamed person, and thereby deprives him of all power to clear and vindicate himself: it is evident and unavoidable; that so far as the malice of one, and the greatness of the other can blast him, he must of necessity be ruined; as being, for the present, utterly destitute of all other relief, but the conscience of his own innocence, and a reliance upon that Providence, which alone is able to bring light out of darkness; and, in its own good time, to make an injured and abused innocence, in spite of all the conjunctions of envy and power, clear and victorious.

3. The last and grand effect of envy, in respect of the *person envied*, is his utter *ruin and destruction*; for nothing less was intended from the very first, whatsoever comes to be effected in the issue. Its methods of destroying are indeed various; sometimes it assaults a man with open violence; sometimes it smites him secretly; sometimes it flies in his face; and sometimes it reaches him more spitefully with some back-stroke; and so, like the worst of cowards, comes behind him and runs him thorough. For (as I said before) nothing can satisfy envy, but a man's utter confusion, and (if it were possible) his very annihilation. It is not content only to asperse or defame a man, nor regards his mere infamy otherwise, than

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as it is an instrument of his absolute and total ruin. No, it would see him begging at a grate, drawn upon an hurdle, and at length dying upon a gibbet. It would make him odious to his friends, and despised by his enemies. Nothing under death, cloathed with all the circumstances of misery and disaster, that human nature is capable of, can assuage the rage and fury of envy, which in all its persecutions of a man is as *cruel as death, and as insatiable as the grave*. What says the wise man of it, *Prov. xxvii. 4. Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous, but who is able to stand before envy?*

It hunts and pursues a man without remorse or pity, and never rests nor gives him over, till it has suck'd his blood, and drawn out his very breath and soul together. Nor does it stop here, or expire with the bare life of the envied person, but it tramples even upon his ashes also, lashes and tears his surviving memory, and possibly wrecks itself likewise upon his posterity. So that the child, as heir apparent, shall inherit all the calamities, succeed into all the enormities and disgusts, that worried the father while living; they shall, I say, all of them, be charged upon the son's person, as debts are upon his estate. And lastly, Envy has a peculiar malignity in it, that the grudges arising from it admit of no reconciliation.

There

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There is no buying a man's peace with an envious person : but the burnings of such an hatred are, like those of hell, intolerable and perpetual. For the truth is, all sort of reconciliation, in the very nature of the thing, supposes a deprecation of, or a satisfaction for some injury, which first caused a breach between the persons thus to be reconciled. But envy grounds not itself upon any injury offered, or done it, by any man ; it has no provocation but its neighbour's virtue or felicity ; crimes never pardoned by envy, wheresoever in any topping degree it finds them.

And thus having given some account of this vile and accursed quality, and that both as to its nature and consequences ; and likewise both in respect of him who envies another, as likewise of him also who is envied by him ; come we now to the third and last thing proposed for the handling of the words, and that was to make some use and improvement of the subject hitherto treated of by us : and what better and more important use can we make of it, than to convince and remind us of these following things ?

1. First, of the extreme vanity of even the most excellent and best esteemed enjoyments of this world. How do riches and honour, wit and beauty, strength and learning, shine

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and glister in the eyes of most men ! And no doubt, but as all of them are the gifts, so are they also the blessings of God to those, who can make a wise and sanctified use of them. But such is our unhappiness in this vale of weakness and mortality, that like *Jonas's* gourd, no sooner do these things shoot out and flourish about us, and we begin to delight and please ourselves under the shadow of them, but God quickly provides a worm, even that killing one of envy, to smite the root of them, and then presently they decline, wither, and die over our heads. Shadows do not more naturally attend shining bodies, than envy pursues worth and merit, always close at the very heels of them, and like a sharp blighting east wind, still blasting and killing the noblest and most promising productions of virtue in their earliest bud ; and as *Jacob* did *Esau*, supplants them in their very birth. For what made *Saul* so implacably persecute *David* ? Was it not the greatness of his valour ; and the glory of his actions, which drew after them the applause of the whole kingdom, and consequently the envy of the king himself ? How comes history to tell us of so many assassinations of Princes, downfalls of Favourites, underminings and poisonings of great Persons ? Why, in all or most of these sad events, still only worth
has

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has been the *crime*, and envy the executioner! What drew the blood of *Cæsar*; banished *Cicero*, and put out the eyes of the brave and victorious *Belisarius*, but a merit too great for an emperor to reward, and for envy to endure? And what happiness can there be in such things, as only make the owners of them fall a woful sacrifice to the base suspicions and cruelties of some wicked and ungrateful great ones; but always worse, than they are or can be great? He indeed, who is actually possessed of these glorious endowments, thinks them both his ornament and defence; and so does the man think the sword he wears: though the point of it may be sometimes turned upon his own breast; and it is not unheard of, for a man to die by that very weapon, which he reckoned he should defend and preserve his life by.

2. This may convince us of the *safety of the lowest*, and the *happiness of a middle condition*. Take the poorest wretch who begs his bread from door to door, yet he does not this in fear of that life, which he begs for the support of: for that he accounts safe, and thinks he needs no watch to guard it against the motions or designs of any potent adversary, but walks unconcernedly, and sleeps securely; for his poverty is his guard, and his rags his armour. No poisons or daggers are prepared in hospitals;

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hospitals : these are entertainments, which envy treats men with in courts and palaces. Only power and greatness are prize for envy : whose evil eye always *looks upwards*, and whose *hand* scorns to *strike*, where it can *place* its *foot*. Life, and a bare competence, are a quarry too low for so stately a vice as *envy* to fly at. And therefore men of a middle condition, are indeed doubly happy. First, that, with the poor, they are not the objects of *pity* ; nor, 2. With the rich and great, the mark of *envy*. *Give me neither poverty nor riches*, (said *Agar* :) and it is a question, whether the *piety* or *prudence* of that prayer were greater. The honest country gentleman, and the thriving tradesman, or country farmer, have all the real benefits of nature, and the blessings of plenty ; that the highest and richest grandees can pretend to ; and (which is more) all these without the tormenting fears and jealousies of being rivalled in their Prince's favour, or supplanted at court, or tumbled down from their high and beloved stations. All those storms fly over their heads, and break upon the tow'ring mountains, and lofty cedars ; they have no ill-got places to lose ; they are neither libelled nor undermined, but, without invading any man's right, sit safe and warm in a moderate fortune of their own, and free from all that grandeur and magni-

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magnificence of misery, which is sure to attend an invidious greatness. And he who is not contented with such a condition, must seek his happiness (if ever he have any) in another world, for providence itself can provide no better for him in this.

3. And lastly, we learn from hence the necessity of a man's depending upon something without him, higher and stronger than himself, even for the preservation of his ordinary concerns in this life. Nothing can be a greater argument to make a man fly, and cast himself into the arms of Providence, than a due consideration of the nature and the workings of envy. For how fierce and cruel, how watchful and diligent, how remorseless and implacable, and, which is worst of all, how causeless for the most part, and how unprovoked is this vile thing in all its assaults upon its neighbour; not acting upon any injury or motive from without, but boiling over upon all about it, through an overflowing fulness of malice from within?

The greatest strength which God has vouchsafed men to secure themselves by in this world, are *innocence* and *wisdom*; and yet both of them together are not always an equal match for *envy*. Thou perhaps art busied in the honest employments of thy estate, or calling, neither
doing

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doing nor thinking hurt to any one ; but in the mean time envy may chance to be much busier than thou, dropping poison into the ears of thy Prince, or Patron, and so dashing thy innocent name and fortune with such a killing whisper, as shall strip thee of all in a moment, before thou shalt know either the tongue that hurt thee, or the hand that smote thee. Hast thou a large estate ? so had *Naboth* ; yet envy quickly found a *Jezabel* to alter the title, and dispossess the true owner of his rich vineyard. Hast thou friends in the world ? their minds may change, and their friendship fail thee, when the envy of two or three back friends shall be continually stabbing and pecking at their good opinion of thee, till at length they strike thee thro' and thro', and so pierce thy *heart*, before it ever reaches thy ear. And lastly, hast thou a fair reputation and name in the world ? know that it is but as glass, the foul breath of envy can quickly shatter, and the least touch of the hand easily break it. For it is God only who must watch over thy good name, and protect thy reputation. For envy will be awake against it when thou art asleep, and still present to asperse thee when thou art absent, and so not able to vindicate or speak one word for thyself. And therefore none but that great keeper of

Israel,

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Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, and whose omnipresence makes him actually present in all places, can preserve thee in this great concern. It is he (I say) who must keep thee *secretly in his pavillion* from the *strife of tongues*, controul their virulence, and rebuke the foul and restless spirit of slander and detraction. For otherwise, he who reckons himself out of the reach and power of envy, by any pitch of greatness or goodness whatsoever, is like that man whom *Solomon* represents *lying down to sleep upon the top of a mast*, and never considers either the winds and storms roaring about him, or the cruel devouring deep gaping under him; a very unsecure place certainly to sleep in, *tho' never so high*.

Nor has that man pitched upon a safer dormitory, who thinks to rest quietly over a much more merciless *element*, and more dangerous a *deep* of the two (as we have proved envy to be) unless the man's sense and reason should have first left him, and *fallen fast asleep* before him. In a word, what mortal can stand his ground against this irresistible engine of all mischief? Even the wisest have perished by its wiles, and the most innocent been taken by its snares; the noblest, and most valiant, the ablest ministers of state, and most renowned commanders in war; nay, even kings themselves have some-
times

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times fallen before it; so impossible is it for any thing in nature to be sure of protection against it; but that man only, who, under the cover of an almighty wing, has made the *King of Kings* his refuge, and the *God of Gods* his everlasting habitation.

*To whom therefore be rendred and ascribed,
as is most due, all praise, might, majesty,
and dominion, both now and for evermore.
Amen.*

CHRIST'S

CHRIST'S *Promise the Support of his
despised Ministers.*

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at

CHRIST - CHURCH, *Oxon*, on the
30th of *April*, 1668.

BEING

ASCENSION-DAY.

SERMON XI.

CHRIST'S Promise, the Support
of his despised Ministers.

LUKE XXI. 15.

For I will give you a Mouth and Wisdom, which all your Adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.

IT being the great design of our Saviour's coming into the world to declare and prove himself the *Messias*, and to establish a church upon that belief; we have him here encouraging the ministers of it with this notable promise, left them as a kind of legacy not long before his death; together with a prediction of what should befall them after it: which was so dreadful and discouraging, that nothing but such a *promise* could support them against the terrors of such a *prediction*. And therefore

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as a tender master, all made up of goodness and compassion, while he delivers them this bitter cup with one hand, he reaches them as great a cordial with the other; all that he here promised, or said to them, being but a pledge of what he would more abundantly do for them after his ascension: When having finished his dolorous course here, and triumphantly sat down at the right hand of his father, his glorious employment ever after should be, as a *King* to make good, what as a *Prophet* he had foretold. And this he did with so exact a conformity of his actions to his words, that no instance can be given thro' all the records of time, where there is so perfect and punctual a correspondence between *past* and *present*, as we see and find in the predictions and promises of our Saviour in his life, and the completion of them since his death. A most clear and full proof doubtless of his doctrine, and consequently as infallible a demonstration of the divinity of his person, and the authentick truth of his commission.

In the words we have these two things considered.

1. Something implied by way of *prediction*, viz. That the Apostles should be sure to meet with adversaries, who would both *gainsay* and *resist* them in the discharge of their apostolick function.

2. Some-

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2. Something declared by way of *promise*, viz. That they should find such succour and assistance from their Lord and Master, after the resumption of his glory, as should make and overcome all this opposition.

Which two heads comprehend all that is in the text, and accordingly I shall give some brief account of both. And,

1. For the first of these, the *prediction* here implied, viz. That the Apostles should not fail of adversaries to oppose them. This indeed was to be no small argument of their apostolick mission, though by no means to be reckoned amongst miracles, it being so far from having any thing of miracle or wonder in it, that nothing can be more frequent, usual, and indeed fashionable, than for the generality of men to malign a preacher, and persecute an apostle. For such as engage themselves in the service of that grating, displeasing thing to the world, called *truth*, must expect the natural issue and consequent of truth, which is a mortal *hatred* of those who speak it. The christian ministry is a troublesome and a disgusted institution, and as little regarded by men as they regard their souls, but rather hated as much as they love their sins. The church is every one's prey, and the shepherds are pilled, and polled, and fleeced by none

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more than by their own flocks. A prophet is sure to be without honour, not only in his own country, but almost in every one else. I scarce ever knew any ecclesiastick but was treated with scorn and distance; and the only peculiar respect I have observed shewn such persons in this nation (which yet I dare say they could willingly enough dispense with) is, that sometimes a clergyman of an hundred pound a year has the honour to be taxed equal to a layman of ten thousand. Even those who pretend most respect to the church and churchmen, will yet be found rather to *use* than to *respect* them; and if at any time they do aught for them, or give any thing to them, it is not because they are really lovers of the church, but to serve some turn by being thought so. As some keep chaplains, not out of any concern for religion, but as it is a piece of grandeur something above keeping a coach; it looks creditable and great in the eyes of the world: tho' in such cases he who serves at the altar, has generally as much contempt and disdain passed upon him, as he who serves in the kitchen, tho' perhaps not in the same way; if any regard be had to him, it is commonly such an one as men have for a garment (or rather a pair of shoes) which fits them, *viz.* to *wear* him and *wear* him, till he is worn out, and

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and then to lay him aside. For be the Grantee he depends upon never so powerful, he must not expect that he will do any thing for him, till it is scandalous not to do it. If a *first* or *second-rate* living chance to fall in his gift, let not the poor *domestick* think, either learning, or piety, or long service, a sufficient pretence to it; but let him consider with himself rather, whether he can answer that difficult question, * *Who was Melchisedeck's father?* or whether instead of *grace for grace* he can bring *gift for gift*, for all other qualifications without it will be found empty and insignificant.

In short, every thing is thought too much for persons of this profession. Tho' one would think, that as they are men, and men who have been at the charge of an expenceful and laborious education, as much or more than most others, they ought upon the very right of nature and justice to expect a return, in some degree (at least) proportionable to such cost and labour, as well as men of any other profession whatsoever: yet here it seems *religion* must supersede the rule of *justice*, and the course of nature; and the ministers of it must be required to live not only as *spiritual persons*, but as *spirits*; that is, without those

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* A question very hardly *solvable* by a *poor* clergyman, tho' never so *good a divine*.

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common accommodations of life, which God and nature have made necessary to all who are yet in the body, freely to reach out to the whole race of mankind ; and upon no other ground in the world it is, but mens envying the church a competent share of these, that all those virulent, but senseless clamours of the *pride, covetousness, and luxury of the clergy* have been raised : so that when their insolent domineering enemies cannot get them under their feet, as they desire, then presently the clergy are too high and proud. And when avarice disposes men to be rapacious and sacrilegious, then forthwith the church is too rich. And lastly, when with whoring, and gaming, and revelling, they have disabled themselves from paying their butchers, their brewers, and their vintners, then immediately they are all thunder and lightning against the intemperance and luxury of the clergy (forsooth) and high time it is for a *thorough reformation*.

But to disabuse the world, and to answer the several branches of the imputation ; the true account of the pride of the clergy is, that they are able to cloath themselves with something better than rags ; or rather, that they have any thing to cloath them at all, and that the church of *England* would (by its good will) neither have *naked Gospels* nor *naked Evangelists*.

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vangelists. And then in the next place, the covetousness of the clergy is, that they can and do find wherewithal *to pay taxes*, and just enough to keep them from begging afterwards. And lastly, their luxury and intemperance lies in this, that they had rather eat at their own poor home, than lick up the crumbs at *the end* of their haughty neighbour's table, and much less *under* it; that they scorn to sneak here and there for a dinner, or beg their *daily bread* of any but of God himself. The world in the mean time proceeding by no other measure with the clergy than this, *viz.* to exact of them *hospitality to others*, and to grudge them *bread for themselves*. And this is the true account of the *pride, covetousness, and luxury* of the clergy, which by the mouths of puritans and republicans have made such a noise in these deluded kingdoms.

But it is the church's lot to be defamed, libelled, and persecuted on all hands; and may our blessed Lord, who found the same usage before us, give us grace and courage to bear it; even I myself have heard it said, and that with no ordinary acceptance and pleasure to the rest of the company who heard it, *that a divine was to be spit upon by his place*. And be it so, since it must be so. Nevertheless it is the comfort of such, that

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Christ was *spit upon* before them, though he had not indeed the honour to be spit upon by *Christians*; in which respect it must be confessed, that the servants are preferred before their master. And I have heard it said also, *that the church and clergy of England have an interest opposite to the rest of the nation*; that is, in other words, that the whole nation ought to rise up (as one man) against them with staves and clubs, and knock out their brains, as vermin and publick nuisances; and withal, that there ought to be no church or clergy for the future, if the nation will but mind its own interest. This is the proper sense and interpretation of these words; and I hope all the impartial world (which bear and deserve the name of Christians) will consider and remember them.

Nevertheless to dispute this point a little, I would fain know how *the English clergy come to have an interest opposite to the English nation*; for we are both *English* men, and the sons of *English* men (till of late at least) and own no dependence upon any foreign power (as the papists do) and consequently have a claim to a support and maintenance from our country, while we serve it in a profession useful to the exigencies of it. And whether those, whose profession obliges them to be still pressing obedience

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obedience upon their fellow-subjects to their sovereign, and just and amicable dealing with one another, together with an universal regulation of mens manners, serve the publick by a profession useful to the exigencies thereof, we appeal to the publick, and to all men of sense and conscience to judge. But if, because the clergy will never attempt, by *cheating* and *pimping*, to raise themselves from beggary to great estates and high stations, and have not forty, or fifty, or perhaps an hundred thousand pounds ready at every hand for a purchase, they must therefore have an *interest opposite to the rest of the nation*: this opposition, for aught I see, is like to continue as long as the *honesty* and *poverty* of the clergy (for the most part accompanying it) is like to do. But whether those, who avow such an implacable enmity against the ministry, will be able to preserve this, or any other government, so much as one poor minute from the ruin which their own detestable lives, principles and vices, threaten it with, is very much to be questioned; or rather indeed it is past all question, that they tend directly, and operate strongly, towards its utter ruin and destruction.

Upon the whole matter, if we consider the treatment of the clergy in these nations, since popery was driven out, both as to the language and

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and usage which they find from most about them; I do, from all that I have read, heard, or seen, confidently aver (and I wish I could speak it loud enough to reach all the corners and quarters of the whole world) that there is no nation or people under heaven, christian or not christian, which despise, hate, and trample upon their clergy or priesthood comparably to the *English*. So that (as matters have been carried) it is really no small argument of the predominance of conscience over interest, that there are yet parents who can be willing to breed up any of their sons (if hopefully endowed) to so *discouraged* and *discouraging* a profession.

We see then, according to the prediction in the text, how, from the apostolick age, down all along to the present, the ministers of Christ were sure to meet with enemies; and that, whether they were professedly such, or pretendedly friends, their enmity was still the same, and perhaps much more fatal in the effects of it, acting under this latter guise than under the former; as the thief never does his business so effectually as when he robs under a vizard. After which, the next thing offering itself to our consideration, is, how this enmity (especially in the Apostles time, which the words chiefly point at) was to exert itself, and
that

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that the text tells us was to be two ways, *viz.* by *word* and *deed*; by *gainsaying* and *resisting*; and these two certainly could not but afford scope and compass enough for all the malice of man to employ and spend itself in.

And accordingly we will speak distinctly of both of them. And,

I. For *gainsaying*; the word in the *Greek* is ἀντιπείν, importing opposition in disputation, with an endeavour to refel or confute what is alledg'd by another; and the design of it is *redarguation*, call'd by *Aristotle* ἐλέγχος, or ἐλέχθαι; that is, a concluding of something contradictory to the proposition asserted. And this we find the Apostles frequently and fiercely encountered by adversaries of very different persuasions, by *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and the several sects belonging to both. As for our Saviour himself, who led the way, and was first engaged in such conflicts, we know the constant issue of all the disputes the *Jews* had with him was, that he silenced them by an absolute confutation. So that the end of all these contests was, *that they durst not ask him any more questions*; shewing hereby so much discretion at least, as to know when they were baffled, and to say no more. And this mighty force in arguing he was pleased to transmit to his Apostles after him, as it was highly requisite that

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that he should. Whereupon we see how *Peter* and *John* (as illiterate as they were) non-plussed the whole council of the priests and elders, giving such an edge to the truth they spoke, that the text tells us *it cut them to the heart*, Acts v. And in the next place we read, how *St. Stephen* confounded the synagogue of the *Libertines*, and *Cyrenians*, and *Alexandrians*, together with them of *Cilicia*, and of *Asia*, disputing with him; so that the text remarkably notes, that they were not able to withstand the *wisdom and spirit by which he spake*, Acts vi. 9. Truth (it seems) with that one single weapon of wisdom to defend it, being an over-match to never so many tongues opposing it. Likewise we find how *Apollos* triumph'd over his *Jewish* opponents, mightily convincing them *that Jesus was Christ*, Acts xviii. 28. And the same over-powering spirit we find conjuring down *Elymas* the forcerer, opposing *St. Paul's* doctrine, Acts xiii. 7, 8. The like opposition also the same Apostle complains of from *Alexander* the copper-smith, greatly withstanding the gospel taught by him, 1 *Tim.* iv. 5. And it was well the *copper-smith* did not out of spite turn preacher, and so disgrace it more.

But this *gainsaying* humour stopp'd not in the doctrine preached, but overflow'd and work'd

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work'd over also upon the preachers themselves; and that in calumnies and slanders of all sorts; sometimes reproaching them as *drunkards*, in *Acts* ii. 13. and thereby shewing us, that the charge of *intemperance* upon the clergy was as early as the Apostles, who had a liberal share of it; and not only so, but it began even upon Christ himself, who was taxed for a *glutton*, and a *wine-bibber*, long before them: though (methinks) it looks something odd and unaccountable, that those should make the lame walk, and restore to others the use of their legs, who had drunk themselves off their own. They were traduced also as publick incendiaries, and such as *turned the world upside down*; *Acts* xvii. 6. which yet (as the world then stood with idolatry at the head of it, and truth under foot) was perhaps the only way to restore it to its right posture. They were also jeered and flouted at, as *fools and babblers*; *Acts* xvii. 18. But why then did not those profound Rabbies amongst the *Jews*, and the *Stoicks* and *Epicureans* (those *oracles of reason*) amongst the philosophers, baffle and refel these babblers, and so dashing their absurd doctrine in its first rise, prevent its spreading by a mature and thorough confutation? But it was ever an easier work to contradict, than to confute. From reproaching them as fools, they
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proceeded to represent them also as *madmen*; *Acts* xxvi. 24. 2 *Cor.* v. 13. Though this, I confess, seems not so much a wonder to me, since I doubt not but the clergy in all ages (if but well beneficed) would be accused for *lunatics*, if for so doing their accusers might be their *guardians*. But since it would be endless to traverse all particulars, let it suffice us to have observed, that as in the forecited *Acts* xvii. 32. we find the *Athenians* mocking; and in *Acts* xviii. 6. the *Jews* opposing themselves and blaspheming: so let us take the sum total of all from that one place in *Acts* xxviii. 22. *As for this sect, we know, that it is every where spoken against.* In fine, the Apostles and Ministers of Christ were look'd upon as the very offals and off-scouring of the world, and were trampled upon accordingly. They were scarce ever mentioned, but with slander; or so much as spoken to, but with sarcasm and invective. They were perpetually railed at as deceivers and impostors, even while they were endeavouring to undeceive the world from those wretched impostures and delusions, which had so long and so miserably bewitched it: in a word, they were like physicians exchanging cures for curses; and reviled and abused by their froward patients, while they were doing all they could for their health and recovery. But,

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2. The other branch of the opposition designed against the Apostles and Ministers of Christ, is expressed by *resisting*; a word importing a much more substantial kind of enmity than that which only spends at the mouth, and shews itself in *froth* and *noise*; an enmity, which, instead of scoffs and verbal assaults, should encounter them with all that art could contrive, or violence execute; with whips and scourges, cross and gibbet, swords and axes; and though bare words draw no blood, yet these (to be sure) would. And such were the weapons, with which they were to act their butcheries upon the Christians; till at length through all the sorts and degrees of cruelty the same martyrdom should both *crown* and *conclude* their sufferings together. Nor were these persecutions more terrible for their sharpness, than for their frequency, and sometimes their continuance also: ten persecutions in the space of the three first centuries, and the last of them of ten years duration. They came so fast upon the Christians, that all the intermission they had from one persecution, was but a kind of pause or breathing-time (a short *parentbesis* of ease) to enable them for another. So that notwithstanding those short intervals, it was really and indeed a persecution still; and the work went on,

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though the workman might sometimes sleep or stand still a little, to gather more strength. For the persecuting Spirit seemed to shake the primitive church like a mighty ague; and it held it for a long time; the disease continuing, when the fits were gone off. This was the miserable condition; which Christianity was then in; the whole world rising up in arms, and combining in a common association against the professors and preachers of it; a forlorn company (God knows) of helpless defenceless men, without any thing but *truth* and *innocence* to stand by them: Idolatry in the meanwhile sitting in the thrones of emperors, marching in the head of armies, and commanding the joint assistance of all that was worldly, wise or mighty, to secure it in the possession of the so long captivated and deluded universe. So that no wonder, armed with all this power, persecution raged with a vengeance. And yet by all the terrible massacres and executions done by it, it neither did nor could prevail. For as much as that which kills the person, does not therefore destroy the cause; especially a cause designed to teach sufferings, to be carried on by suffering, and lastly to conquer and command the world by suffering. In a word, a religion founded in the cross (as that of Christianity

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Christianity eminently was) could not surely be extinguished or suppressed by it.

But some may possibly here object and say, that all, that has been hitherto spoken by us of this *gainsaying and resisting the Apostles*, seems a direct contradiction to the text, which positively affirms, *that their adversaries should not be able to gainsay or resist them*. But this difficulty is small, or rather indeed none at all, and consequently the solution very easy and obvious; for the *gainsaying or resisting*, mentioned in the text, may either signify the bare acts of *gainsaying or resisting*, or the *success and prevalence* of the said acts against the persons so *gainsaid or resisted*: and accordingly the full drift and meaning of the text is, that the Apostles adversaries, by all the virulence of words, and violence of actions, which they could and would use, should not be able to prevail over them, or run them down; howbeit they would not fail with all their might to attempt it, and to that purpose to *gainsay and resist them* to the utmost, though in the issue all to little or no effect, unless perhaps to their own confusion. In fine, that, as long as the world stands, Christianity shall be sure to be opposed; and as long as it is opposed, shall certainly overcome.

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And so from the thing supposed or implied in the text, I now proceed to the other, and next thing positively declared in the same, to wit, *Christ's promise* to his Apostles of such an assistance from above, as should overcome and master all their adversaries opposition: which promise we will consider two ways, (1.) According to its form and coherence with the context. And (2.) according to *the subject matter of it*. And,

(1.) For the first of these. The words being introduced by the *causal* particle *for*, shew, that they stand as a reason here assigned of something going before; which we shall find to have been a warning given by Christ to his disciples against those fears and misgiving apprehensions, which he foresaw would be apt to seize and work upon their spirits, when they should find themselves so fiercely and universally opposed on all sides: in which case, though he allowed of *caution*, yet he was for taking off the *fright*: nothing considerable being ever atchieved by a mind damped and surprized with fear; a passion, which will be sure to betray a man in the exercise of all his faculties. For he, who fears his enemy, fights for him; or (which is worse) gives him the victory without the trouble of a battel.

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Nor can any thing more peculiarly unqualify a man for the office of an apostle or preacher of the gospel, than this degenerate quality: for it makes him unable to look a bold sinner in the face, to assert a disgusted truth, or to own his commission, when power and interest shall frown him into silence and mean compliances.

Nevertheless, since fear itself may plead reason, when it meets with objects and motives every way equal to the natural workings of it; our Saviour never forbids the passion, till he first removes the reason of it, as he does here by opposing the success of omnipotence to the assaults of a mortal force; thereby owning the danger, but overmatching it with the deliverance.

Nor was it a bare deliverance, but a conquest, which Christ designed the first champions of the Christian cause; not merely to bring them off safe from their enemies, but to carry them victorious over them. And conquering, doubtless, is more glorious than not fighting, and to see an enemy fall or fly before one, than to have none at all. All which the great captain of our salvation designed and did for his Apostles; and certainly he never exerted his power more to the proof of his Godhead, than when he made such *worms* to

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thresh the mountains, fishermen to silence philosophers, weakness and poverty to brave it over the whole *Roman* empire, the counsels of senates, and the force of legions; and that with the fairest sort of violence imaginable, *viz.* binding their hands by sliding into their hearts.

And thus having given an account of the *form and scheme of the promise* with reference to the context, and what followed, and what went before it; I come now to the other thing to be considered in it, *viz. the subject-matter of it*, which represents to us these *three* things.

(1.) The thing itself *promised*, *viz. a mouth and wisdom.*

(2.) *The person who* promised it, which was Christ himself, *I will give you a mouth and wisdom.*

(3.) *The way by which* Christ performed this *promise*; not indeed here expressed in the text, but fully inferred from several other texts, treating of the same subject; to wit, the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles presently after Christ's ascension into glory; when, and by virtue whereof, this great promise was made good to them. And here,

(1.) For the thing promised; *a mouth and wisdom*, that is, an ability of speaking, joined with an equal prudence in action and behaviour.

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our. Which things we will consider first singly, and then in conjunction. And,

1. For the ability of speaking conferred upon the Apostles. It was highly requisite, that those, who were to be the interpreters and spokesmen of heaven, should have a rhetorick taught them from thence too; and as much beyond any, that could be taught them by human rules and art, as the subjects they were to speak of, surpassed the subject of all human eloquence.

Now this ability of speech I conceive was to be attended with these three properties of it.

1. Great clearness and perspicuity.

2. An unaffected plainness and simplicity.

And,

3. A suitable and becoming zeal or fervour.

And,

1. For its *perspicuity*: Christ and his Apostles well knew, that the great truth delivered by them would support itself, and that barely to deliver it, would be abundantly sufficient to enforce it; nakedness (of all things) being never able to make truth ashamed. There was nothing false, faulty, or suspicious in it, and therefore they were not afraid to venture it in the plainest and most intelligible language. Where indeed the thing to be spoken is unwarrantable, and the design of the speaker as

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bad, or worse, there, I confess, every word may need a cloak of obscurity both to cover and protect it too: but truth and worth neither need nor affect to keep out of sight, nor the *lights of the world* to wrap themselves in a cloud. The Apostles never taught men to *preach* or *pray* in an *unknown tongue*; nor valued such devotion, as had *ignorance* for its *parent*. Christ still closed his instructions to his disciples with this question, *do ye understand these things?* And we find no parable, but the rear of it is brought up with an explication. For even when Christ and his Apostles preached the most mysterious truths of religion, yet then, though the thing uttered might nonplus their reason, the way and manner of their uttering it was plain, easy, and familiar; and the hearer never put to study, when it was his business only to hear and understand. The oracles of Christ were not like those of *Apollo*, doubtful and ambiguous, always made to deceive, and commonly to destroy; but on the contrary, as the grand business of our Saviour, and his Apostles after him, was *to teach*, and that chiefly in order *to persuade*; so they well knew, that there could be no effectual passage into the *will*, but through the *judgment*; nor any free admission into the *former*, but by a full passport from the *latter*. And therefore

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therefore we find not, that in their sermons they were for amusing or astonishing their auditory with difficult nothings, rabbinical whimsies, and remote allusions, which no man of sense and solid reason can hear without weariness and contempt.

Besides that, if we look into the reason of the thing itself, it will be found, that all obscurity of speech is resolvable into the confusion and disorder of the speaker's thoughts ; for as thoughts are properly the images and representations of objects to the mind, and words the representations of our thoughts to others, it must needs follow, that all faults or defects in a man's *expressions*, must presuppose the same in his *notions* first.

In short, nothing in nature can be imagined, more absurd, irrational and contrary to the very design and end of speaking, than an obscure discourse ; for in that case the preacher may as well leave his *tongue*, and his auditors their *ears* behind them, as neither he communicate, nor they understand any more of his mind and meaning, after he has spoken to them, than they did before.

And yet as ridiculous as such fustian bombast from the pulpit is, none are so transported and pleased with it, as those, who least understand it. For still the greatest admirers

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of it are the grossest, the most ignorant, and illiterate country people, who, of all men, are the fondest of high-flown metaphors and allegories, attended and set off with scraps of *Greek* and *Latin*, though not able even to read so much of the latter, as might save their necks upon occasion.

But laying aside all such studied insignificant trifles, it was the clearness of the Apostles preaching, which rendered it victorious and irresistible. And this we may rest upon as certain, that he is still the powerfullest preacher, and the best orator, who can make himself best understood. But,

2. A second property of the ability of speech, conferred by Christ upon his Apostles, was its unaffected plainness and simplicity: it was to be easy, obvious and familiar; with nothing in it strained, or far fetched; no affected scheme or airy fancies, above the reach or relish of an ordinary apprehension; no, nothing of all this; but their grand subject was truth, and consequently above all these petty arts, and poor additions; as not being capable of any greater lustre or advantage, than to appear just as it is. For there is a certain majesty in plainness; as the proclamation of a prince never frisks it in tropes, or fine conceits, in numerous and well-turned periods, but
commands

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commands in sober, natural expressions. A substantial beauty, as it comes out of the hands of nature, needs neither paint, nor patch; things never made to adorn, but to cover something, that would be hid. It is with expression, and the cloathing of a man's conceptions, as with the cloathing of a man's body. All dress and ornament supposes imperfection, as designed only to supply the body with something from without, which it wanted, but had not of its own. Gaudery is a pitiful and a mean thing, not extending farther than the surface of the body; nor is the highest gallantry considerable to any, but to those who would hardly be considered without it: for in that case indeed, there may be great need of an *outside*, where there is little or nothing *within*.

And thus also it is with the most necessary and important truths; to adorn and cloath them is to cover them, and that to obscure them. The eternal salvation and damnation of souls, are not things to be treated of with jests and witticisms. And he who thinks to furnish himself out of plays and romances with language for the pulpit, shews himself much fitter to act a part in the revels, than for a cure of souls.

I speak the words of soberness, said St. Paul, *Acts* xxvi. 25. And I preach the gospel not
with

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with the *enticing words of man's wisdom*, 1 Cor. ii. 4. This was the way of the Apostles discourfing of things facred. Nothing here of *the fringes of the north-star*; nothing of *nature's becoming unnatural*; nothing of the *down of Angels wings*, or *the beautiful locks of Cherubims*: no starched fimilitudes, introduced with a *Thus have I feen a cloud rolling in its airy manfion*, and the like. No, thefe were fublimities above the rife of the apoftolick Spirit. For the Apostles, poor mortals, were content to take lower fteps, and to tell the world in plain terms, *that he who believed fhould be faved, and that he who believed not fhould be damned*. And this was the dialect, which pierced the confcience, and made the hearers cry out, *Men and brethren what fhall we do?* It tickled not the ear, but funk into the heart: and when men came from fuch fermons, they never commended the preacher for his taking voice or gefture; for the finenefs of fuch a fimile, or the quaintnefs of fuch a fentence: but they fpoke like men conquered with the overpowering force and evidence of the moft concerning truths; much in the words of the two difciples going to *Emmaus*; *Did not our hearts burn within us, while he opened to us the Scriptures?*

In a word, the Apostles preaching was therefore mighty and fuccefsful, becaufe plain, natural,

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tural, and familiar, and by no means above the capacity of their hearers: nothing being more preposterous, than for those, who were professedly aiming at mens *hearts*, to miss the mark, by shooting *over their heads*.

3. The *gift of preaching*, conferred by Christ upon his Apostles, required a suitable zeal and fervour to attend it; for without this, as high and important a truth as the Gospel preached by them was, none would have believed that it had any powerful effect upon the preacher's own affections, nor consequently that it could have wrought at all more upon other mens; this is most certain. So true is it, that the same things, differently expressed, as to the proper effects of persuasion, are indeed not the same. A cold indifference dispirits a discourse; but a due fervour gives it life and authority, and sends it home to the inmost powers of the soul, with an easy insinuation, and a deep impression.

But then I do by no means place this zeal in speaking loud, in sweating, or in a boisterous motion or agitation of the body, for all this looks rather like the preacher's *wrestling* with his auditory, than *instructing* it; but I place it in his shewing a warm and sensible apprehension on his part of the things uttered by him; so that the very manner of his speaking
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ing shall demonstrate the real inward sense he has of what he speaks, and that in the judgment of all who hear him.

Thus when Christ accosted *Jerusalem* with that melting exprobration in *Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as an hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not? behold your house is left to you desolate.* Now what a relenting strain of tenderness was there in this reproof from the great Doctor, as well as Saviour of souls, and how infinitely more moving than if he had said only; *O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, how wicked and barbarous is it in you thus to persecute and stone God's prophets? And how can you but expect some severe judgment from God upon you for it?* Who, I say, sees not the vast difference in these two ways of address, as to the vigour and winning compassion of the one, and the low dispirited flatness of the other in comparison? Likewise for *St. Paul*, observe how he uttered himself in his excellent farewell discourse to the elders of *Ephesus, Acts xx.* from verse 18, to the end of the chapter, and particularly in verse 31. *Remember (says he) how that for the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and*

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and day with tears. These were the arguments here used by this great Apostle, arguments, in comparison of which he knew that the most flowing rhetorick of words would be but a poor and faint persuasive. And then again in 2 Cor. xi. 29. with what a true and tender passion does he lay forth his fatherly care and concern for all the churches of Christ? *Who, says he, is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* Than which words nothing doubtless could have issued from the tongue or heart of man more endearing, more patheticall, and affectionate.

And thus much for the ability or gift of speaking, the first member of the promise made by Christ here to his disciples. The other and next is that of *wisdom*, the noblest endowment of the mind of man of all others, of an endless extent, and of a boundless comprehension; and in a word, the liveliest representation that a created nature can afford of the infinity of its maker. And this, as it is in men, is properly the great principle, directing them how to demean themselves in all the particular passages, accidents and occasions of human life, which being in the full compass of them indeed innumerable, to recount and treat of them all here, would be next to impossible; but as that wisdom which most peculiarly be-
longed

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longed to the first dispensers and ministers of the Gospel, I shall only mention two instances, in which it most remarkably shews itself: namely,

1. That they opposed neither things nor persons, any farther than they stood in their way in the ministry of it. On the contrary, *I am become all things to all men*, says St. Paul, and that neither to gain favour nor interest, but only converts to Christianity, 1 Cor. ix. 22. And again, he owned the very sect of the *Pharisees*, so far as they owned and contended for the grand article of the *Resurrection* in *Acts* xxiii. 6. In like manner he quoted also and approved several things out of some of the *heathen poets*, as in *Acts* xvii. 28. and *Titus* i. 12. In a word, he never rejected any real solid *truth*, whether spoken by *Jew* or *Heathen*, or whatsoever the design of either of them might be in the speaking of it. For as right reason most certainly lies at the foundation of all true religion, so the Apostles embraced all that, which by genuine consequence was deduced from thence by any sort or sect of men whatsoever; for as much as they made not those deductions under the formal notion of such a *sect* or *party*, but as they were rational men, arguing rightly upon the general received principles of nature. And accordingly
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the Apostles countenanced, and fell in with *truth* so offered them, wheresoever they found it; they valued a *pearl*, tho' took up from a *dunghill*. And to have done otherwise, had neither been zeal nor discretion, but a kind of ridiculous and morose partiality. But,

2. The other instance of the *wisdom* given by our Saviour to his Apostles, was their resolute opposing all doctrines and interests whatsoever, so far as they stood in opposition to the Gospel. They would not so much as hold their peace in such a case, but their proceeding was absolute and peremptory, *Acts* v. 29. *We ought to obey God rather than men.* And when a point of *christian liberty* was endangered by the judaizing brethren in *Gal.* ii. 5. *We gave place to them* (says the blessed St. Paul) *no not for an hour.* And we know how he withstood St. Peter himself to the face upon the like occasion. We read also how the same Apostle preached of *justice and temperance* before *Felix*, who he notoriously knew lived in a lewd incestuous marriage, and was equally infamous for bribery and extortion.

And this undoubtedly was his *wisdom*, his high and apostolick *wisdom*; tho' had he indeed lived in such an age as measures conscience by latitude and compliance, and wisdom by what a man can get, much another kind

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kind of character would no doubt have attended him, and he would have been taxed as a weak, hasty, and inconsiderate person, for reflecting upon and provoking the governour, who had used him fairly and civilly: so that if he had been but *less free of his tongue*, and a little *more free of his purse*, he might in all likelihood have been very easily released, and perhaps preferred too; but now, poor man, he has quite lost himself.

Such would have been the descants of our modern politicks upon this occasion; but after all, if the word of truth itself may be heard, that, we shall find, knows no wisdom in an Apostle, but what makes him bold and fearless in the cause of the church, and of religion, and ready to discharge a rebuke upon any of the highest rank of *right worshipful* or *right honourable sinners*, where a scandalous guilt shall call for, or make it necessary; the contrary practice being incomparably the grossest of follies, and such as will be sure to lay a man low enough in the next world, whatsoever preferment it may raise him to in this.

And thus we have seen here the full compass of our Saviour's *promise* to his *ministers* and *disciples*, even the two most valuable perfections of man's nature, and the very top of the wisest of the heathens wish, *sapere & fari*,

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a mouth and wisdom, a sagacity of mind, and a command of speech. And he bestows them also in their proper lustre, and greatest advantage ; that is to say, united, and like two stars in conjunction ; many indeed being able to bring *mouth* enough to the ministry, tho' as for *wisdom*, that may even shift for itself ; but still those two stand best by mutual support and communication, elocution without wisdom being empty and irrational, and wisdom without elocution barren and unprofitable. *Præstat eloqui, modò cum prudentiâ, quàm sine eloquio acutissimè cogitare*, said the great master of eloquence. A faculty to *speak properly*, and to *act wisely*, was a legacy fit to be left by the Saviour of the world to those, by whom he intended to instruct the world. And so much for the first general thing proposed from the words, to wit, the thing promised ; I proceed now to the

(2.) The person promising, who was Christ himself, *I will give you a mouth and wisdom*. I lay a peculiar stress and remark upon this, because Christ seems by this very thing to give his disciples an assurance of his Resurrection. He knew that it would not be long before they should see him crucified, killed, and laid in the grave, and so under all the umbrages of weakness and mortality that human nature could undergo ; but when again in the midst of all

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this they should remember, that there was still a promise in store, not yet fulfilled, and withal not capable of being fulfilled by a person dead and extinct, they must needs from thence have concluded that he could not abide in that condition, but must irresistibly triumph over the grave, ascend and enter into a state of sovereignty and glory. Every *tongue* which sate upon the Apostles at the day of *Pentecost*, spoke aloud the *Resurrection and Ascension* of him who had promised, and then gave the same. For surely they could not expect to receive gifts from *above*, while the giver of them was *under ground*. And so I proceed to the

(3). And last thing proposed from the text, which was, to shew by what means Christ conferred those gifts upon his Disciples and Apostles; and that we find was by the *effusion of the Holy Ghost*, the author and giver of every good and perfect gift, ministerial gifts more especially. Those were endowments too great to spring either from the strength of nature, or the force of industry. The conferring of which we have eminently set forth in *Matt. x. 19, 20. Take no thought* (says our Saviour) *what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.* They were surely the first, and perhaps will be the last, who ever did, or are like to speak so much

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much sense and reason *extempore*. But the cause is assigned in the next verse, *For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of the Father which speaketh in you.* And this glorious day (we know) informs us that it spoke at length with a witness, with *fiery tongues*, and a *flaming* eloquence, and such an one as bore down all contradiction before it. This was the inspiration which filled and raised them so much above themselves, for their work was too big for a meer mortal strength; and therefore as God himself was to send, so he was also to furnish out his own ambassadors at the cost of heaven (as I may with reverence express it.) The Apostles we find were not (and that by our Saviour's particular order) to stir out of *Jerusalem* till the *Holy Ghost* was come upon them, and then they went forth armed at all points, to encounter either *Jew* or *Gentile*; and they did it both with courage and wisdom, and consequently with triumph and success.

And accordingly we are to carry it in perpetual remembrance, that while the work of preaching the Gospel continues in the world (as he, who is truth itself, has assured us it ever will) the *Spirit* never will be wanting to the faithful preachers of it in a suitable assistance of them, tho' not in the same measure (we own) in which the Apostles were assisted by

it, whose work being peculiar and extraordinary, their assistance was to be so too. *Infal-*
libility was in the Apostles a real privilege, but
 now-a-days an insolent, or rather impudent
 pretence. And yet nothing is more confidently
 and constantly laid claim to, both by the pa-
 pist and the enthusiast, than the Spirit; but
 none certainly ever yet ventur'd to speak *lyes*
and nonsense by the Spirit but themselves. To
 some of which persons indeed the world may
 allow a sort of wisdom, but far from the *wis-*
dom which is from above; and a *mouth* too they
 are well known to have, but a *mouth* never so
 open to *speak* as to *devour*. Christ defend his
 church from such inspired impostors, and
 vouchsafe his mighty presence to all the true
 (tho' too much despised) ministers of it, accor-
 ding to the measure of that glorious promise,
 and the last uttered by him here on earth at
 his victorious ascension into heaven. *Go teach*
all nations, and lo I am with you always, even
unto the end of the world.

To whom therefore, with the Father, and the
Holy Ghost, three Persons, and one God, be
rendred and ascribed (as is most due) all
praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both
now and for evermore. Amen.

*The false Methods of governing and
establisbing the CHURCH OF ENG-
LAND, exploded, &c.*

IN A
DISCOURSE
UPON
GALAT. II. 5.

H h 3

The false methods of governing and
classifying the Chinese of Indo-
China, explained, &c.

DISCOURSE

GALAT. II. 3.

SERMON XII.

Falſe Methods of governing the
Church of *England*, exploded.

GALAT. ii. 5.

*To whom we gave place by Subjection,
not for an Hour; that the Truth of
the Goſpel might continue with you.*

IF in the compaſs of ſo ſmall a ſpace, as from the firſt entrance of Chriſtianity into the world, to the times of the Apoſtle *Paul*, the church of *Galatia* (then but newly planted) could paſs into ſo corrupt and degenerate a condition as this epiſtle represents it in, let none be ſurpriſed to find the very groſſeſt errors ſometimes go into the very beſt and pureſt churches; but wonder rather, that after ſo many centuries ſince paſſed, there ſhould ſtill be (what our Saviour foretold there ſhould

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scarce be at his second coming) such a thing as *faith upon earth*, or indeed *any church* at all.

As for that of *Galatia*, the subject of the text before us, and consisting of great numbers both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, just converted to Christianity, there arose a very early and fierce dispute amongst them, *whether the Jewish customs and ceremonies were to be joined with, and adopted into the Christian profession?* And consequently, *whether the converted Gentiles ought not to be circumcised according to the law of Moses, as well as they had been baptized according to the institution of Christ?* The *Jewish* converts, whose education had made them infinitely fond of the *Mosaick* rites, and who, tho' they had the *substance*, still doated upon the *shadow*; even after they had given up their names to Christ, eagerly contended for the continuance of *circumcision*, and that not amongst themselves only, but for obliging the converted *Gentiles* also to the same. And in this their error they chanced unhappily to be the more confirmed by a temporizing practice of St. *Peter* himself, the great *Apostle of the circumcision*. Who yet (as great as he was) by judaizing in some things, and that even contrary to his own judgment, as well as to the truth of the gospel (the text itself telling

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us in *ver.* 12, 13. of this chapter, that it was indeed no better than downright *dissimulation*) he spread and carried the infection much farther by the authority of his example; so that by this his insincere dealing and compliance, he mightily fixed these *half-Christian Jews*, not only in a confident persistence in their error, but gave them heart also to expostulate the matter very insolently even with St. *Paul* himself, who being by divine commission no less the *Apostle of the Gentiles* than St. *Peter* was of the *Jews*, with a courage equal to his sincerity, both taught and practised quite otherwise than that his *brother Apostle*. Nay, so high did their *judaizing* impudence work, that they began to question the very truth of this *doctrine*, as St. *Paul* not obscurely intimates in chap. i. of this epistle, *ver.* 9. To all which they add their no less rude reflections upon his *Apostleship*, extolling St. *Peter* and others as *pillars*, but undervaluing St. *Paul*, as nothing in comparison of them. And lastly, to compleat these scurrilities, we have their vilifying reproaches of *his person*, their ridiculing his *bodily presence as mean*, and his *speech as contemptible*; and in a word, himself also as by no means so *gifted a brother* (forsooth) *so powerful an holder-forth*, nor of such *edifying* lungs and loudness, as some of their own schismatical tribe.

This,

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This, I say, was the language of a set of schismatics in the church of *Corinth*, mentioned in 2 *Cor.* x. 10. and the like, no doubt, of the brotherhood in *Galatia*; and not of them only, but so long as there shall be governors and government in the church, the same, we may be sure, will be naturally the cry and virulence against them of all schismatics, sectaries, and *dissenters* whatsoever.

But as to *St. Paul's* case now before us, he in his apostolick circuit or visitation, coming to visit these hopeful converts in *Galatia*, accompanied with his beloved *Titus*, (not indeed then circumcised) finds himself very vehemently pressed by them, and that with an importunity next to compulsion, to have him circumcised also, according to the false persuasion they had conceived, of the necessary and perpetual use of circumcision. Nevertheless, as false and confident as this persuasion of theirs was, and as positively as it stood condemned by *St. Paul*, it wanted not for several arguments, and those, seemingly at least, not inconsiderable, to give colour to the defence of it. As, to instance in some of them, might not these *Galatians* have pleaded for the continuance of *Circumcision*; that Christ himself declared, that he came not to destroy the law of *Moses*, but to fulfil it; and if so, was
not

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not *Circumcision* one of the most *considerable parts of that law*? And indeed so considerable, as to be the grand obligation to bind men to all the rest? Did not also Christ command his own disciples *to hear and to do whatsoever the Scribes taught them out of Moses's chair*? And did those *Scribes* teach or own any thing as more *necessary* than *Circumcision*? Moreover, did not St. *Peter*, who was the proper Apostle of the *Circumcision* (as we have shewn) agree and concur with these men in this practice? or, at least, not dissuade them from it? Nay, and did not St. *Paul* himself cause his beloved *Timothy* to be circumcised? And if in this matter there should be any difference between these two Apostles, would not the advantage be clearly on St. *Peter's* side, who having conversed with Christ in the flesh, might rationally be presumed to know the true sense and design of the gospel more exactly than St. *Paul*, who had not so conversed with him? And consequently, that it must be much safer to adhere to the former, in this controversy, than to the latter? And lastly, besides, and above all this, might they not plead themselves extremely scandalized, grieved, and offended at the practice of such brethren, as should lay aside *Circumcision*, which they were sure was at *first commanded*, and never since, (for what they

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they could learn) *forbidden by Christ*; but rather so much the contrary, that to countenance, and (as it were) even *christen* this ceremony, Christ submitted to be *circumcised himself*.

Now surely these things could not but carry some more than ordinary shew of reason with them; and I frankly declare, that I cannot but own them for arguments much more forcible against the abrogation of circumcision, than any that I could ever yet find our non-conformists were able to bring for the abrogation of the ceremonies of our church. And yet as forcible as they were, or seemed to be, they had no other effect upon St. *Paul*, than that with an inflexible steadiness, he rejects both the arguments themselves, and those who urged them; and upon a full cognizance of the merits of the whole cause, he peremptorily withstands those judaizing *trimmers*, and without the least regard either to the *occasional communion*, which St. *Peter* himself had lately vouchsafed them, or fear of his *depriving power* for doing so (if he had any), this *High-church* Apostle (as we may worthily call him) resolves neither *to give place to him*, nor *them*, *no not for an hour*.

This historical account of the occasion of the words here pitched upon by me for my text,

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text, I thought necessary to premise, for the better clearing and handling of them; in order to which, I shall consider in them these five particulars.

1. A fierce opposition made by some erroneous christians in the *church of Galatia* against *St. Paul*, the great *Apostle of the Gentiles*, and consequently of prime authority in that church.

2. The cause of this opposition; which was their importunate and unreasonable pressing of him to the practice of a thing as necessary, which neither was in itself *necessary*, nor so accounted by him.

3. The way of their managing this opposition, which was *by bespattering his doctrine*, and *detracting from the credit and authority of his person*, for withstanding these their encroaching demands.

4. The way, which the Apostle took to deal with such violent encroachers, and that was *by not yielding, or giving place to them, no not for an hour*.

5. And lastly, the end and design driven at by the Apostle in this his method of dealing with them; and that was no less, than the very preservation of the gospel itself, in the truth and purity of it, in these words, *that the truth of the gospel might continue with you*.

The

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The sum of all which five particulars I shall gather into this one proposition; which shall be the subject of the following discourse: namely, *That the best and most Apostolical way to establish a church, and secure to it a lasting continuance of the truth and purity of the gospel, is for the governors and ministers thereof, not to give place at all, or yield up the least lawful, received constitution of it, to the demands or pretences of such, as DISSENT or SEPARATE from it, tho' never so urging and importunate.*

This, I say, is a most plain, natural, undeniable inference, from the words and practice of *St. Paul* himself; and that in a case so like ours in the church of *England*, that a liker can hardly be imagined. And accordingly I shall manage the prosecution of this proposition under these three general heads.

1. I shall examine and consider the *pretences*, alledged by *dissenters*, for our quitting, or yielding up, any of the rites, ceremonies, or orders of our church.

2. I shall shew, what are naturally like to be the *consequences* of such a yielding, or giving them up. And,

3. And lastly, I shall shew, what influence and efficacy a *strict adherence* to the constitutions of our church, and an *absolute refusal* to part with any of them, is like to have towards

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wards a lasting settlement of the same, and of the truth and purity of the gospel amongst us.

But before I enter upon a more particular discussion of any of these, I must premise this observation, as the ground and rule of all, that I shall say upon this subject: namely, that the case is altogether the same of requiring, upon the account of *conscience*, the forbearance of practices in themselves *lawful*, out of a pretence of their *unlawfulness*; and of imposing upon the *conscience* practices in themselves not *necessary*, upon an allegation and pretence of their *necessity*: which latter was heretofore the case between St. *Paul* and those judaizing *Galatians*, as the former has been, and still is, between the church of *England* and the *non-conformists*. Now both of these courses are really and equally *superstitious*: for though amongst us loudness and ignorance have still carried the charge and cry against the ceremonies of our church, yet (as a very learned * Divine of our own has fully proved in a sermon of his at a visitation) this charge truly recoils upon our dissenters themselves in the very point and matter now before us. For, as to urge the practice of a thing in its nature really *indifferent*, as a part of God's worship, and for itself *necessary* to be practised, (which the

* Bishop *Sanderfon*.

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the church of *England* never did, nor does, in the injunction of any its *ceremonies*), is properly *superstitious*; so, on the other side, to make it *necessary* to abstain from practices in themselves *lawful* and *indifferent*, (as the dissenters do, by alledging them to be *sinful* and *unlawful*, and consequently that to abstain from them is part of our *obedience to almighty God*) this is altogether as *superstitious* as the other, and as diametrically opposite to, and destructive of that *Christian liberty*, which Christ has invested his church with.

Which observation being thus premised, I shall now enter upon the first general thing proposed, to wit, to examine and consider the several *pretences* alledged by *dissenters*, for our quitting or giving up any of the constitutions or customs of our church: and here I shall not pretend to recount them all in particular, but only at large, and as they are derivable from, and reducible to these three particulars.

1. The *unlawfulness*. 2. The *inexpediency*. And 3. and lastly, the pretended *smallness* (as they word it) of the things excepted against by them. Each of which I shall touch very briefly upon. And,

1. For their leading plea of the *unlawfulness* of our ceremonies, grounded upon that old, baffled argument, drawn from the *unlawfulness*

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lawfulness of *will-worship*, and the prohibition of *adding to*, or *detracting aught from the word or worship of God*, no other answer need, or can be given to it, than that, which has been given over and over, *viz.* That our ceremonies are not look'd upon either as *divine worship*, or as any *necessary essential part* of it; but only as *circumstances*, and external appurtenances, for the more decent performance of that worship: for, that men should of their own will impose, or use any thing, as the necessary worship of God, or add any thing to that worship, as a necessary essential part of it, this questionless (as the forementioned allegations sufficiently prove, and no body that I know of, denies) must needs be sinful: but if from hence it be affirmed also, that no *circumstance* is to be allowed about the divine worship, but what is declared and enjoined by *express Scripture*, the consequence of that is so insufferably ridiculous, that it will extend to the making it unlawful for the church to appoint any stated *place* or *hour* for God's publick worship, that it will reach also to the very taking away of pulpits, reading-desks, fonts, and every thing else *circumstantially* ministering to the discharge of divine service, if not expressly mentioned and commanded in the written word of God. And let these men, up-

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on the foregoing principle, avoid the absurdity of this consequence, if they can. But it has been well remarked, that the truth is, those men do not really believe themselves, while they thus plead against the ceremonies and orders of our church. For when a late act of parliament required all persons *in office*, or designing to qualify themselves for *any office in the state*, to receive the *sacrament* according to the use and order of the church of *England* (which we all know was to receive it kneeling) we find not, that those men, in such cases, refused the doing of it (how *idolatorus* soever both now and then they pretended it to be) rather than quit the least office of gain, which they actually had, or miss of any, which they were in pursuit of: which practice of theirs, had it been unlawful, surely men of such *tender consciences*, as they own themselves to be of, would never have been brought to; for as much as not the least unlawful thing ought to be done for the greatest advantage whatsoever: though it may be quite otherwise, I confess, with those *new lights*, whose *humour* is their *law*, their *will*, their *reason*; and their *interest* their whole *religion*. And so to pass from hence to their

Second plea, to wit, of the *inexpedience* or *inconvenience* of the said ceremonies in the divine

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vine worship : to which I answer these two things.

I. That [*expedient* or *inexpedient*] being words of a general indefinite sense or signification, and upon that account determinable chiefly by the several fancies, humours, and apprehensions of men about one and the same thing (so that what is judged *expedient* by one man, is often judged as *inexpedient* by another); the judgment of *expedient* or *inexpedient* in matters to be passed into law, ought in all reason to rest wholly in the legislators and governors of any community; and consequently, that no *private* persons whatsoever ought to be look'd upon as competent judges of the *inexpedience* of that, which the legislative power has once enacted and established as *expedient*. But, 2. I affirm also, that what is not only in itself lawful, but likewise highly *conducible* to so great a concern of religion, as *decency and order in divine worship* certainly is, and that to such a degree, conducive to the same, that without it neither order nor decency could possibly continue or subsist; that surely cannot, ought not to be reckoned *inexpedient* upon any contrary account, considerable enough to be compared with, and much less to over-balance that great one of order and regularity in our addresses to

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almighty God: which I affirm the ceremonies used by our church are most properly subservient to. For since the outward acts of divine worship cannot be performed, but with some circumstances and postures of the body, either every man must be left to his own arbitrement, to use what circumstances and postures he pleases; or a rule must be fixed to direct these things after one and the same manner: for the former of these will of necessity infer great diversity and variety in the discharge of the divine worship, and that by as great a necessity will infer such a *disorder, indecency and confusion* in the same, as nothing but an *uniformity* in the behaviour and circumstances of all persons joining in that worship can possibly prevent. An argument (no doubt) worth the consideration of all, who must needs know, that God will not be served by *halves*, but be honoured by *body* as well as *soul*, (the whole man being less than enough) for all our solemn acts of devotion. And so we come now to the

3. And last of their *exceptions*, grounded upon the *smallness* of the things excepted against: to which also my answer is twofold.

1. That these things being in themselves *lawful*, and not only so, but also determined by sufficient authority, their *smallness* is so far from

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from being a reason why we should refuse and stand out against the use of them, that it is an unanswerable argument, why they should without any demur submit to and comply with authority in matters, which they themselves confess to be of no very great moment. For it ought to be a very great and weighty matter indeed, which can warrant a man in his disobedience to the injunctions of lawful authority in any thing whatsoever. And that which is a reason why men should comply with their governours, I am sure can be no reason, why their governours should give place to them. But,

2. I add farther, that nothing actually enjoined by law is, or ought to be, look'd upon as *small* or *little*, as to the use or forbearance of it, during the continuance of that law, nor yet as a sufficient reason for the abrogation of that law; since, be the thing never so *small* in itself, yet being by great deliberation first established, and for a long time since received in the church, and contended for with real and great reason on the one side, be the reasons never so *plausible* (which yet hitherto does not appear) on the other, yet the consequence of a change cannot be accounted *small*, since it is certainly very hazardous at best, and doubtful, what mischief such a change may occa-

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sion, how far it may proceed, and where it may end ; especially since the experience of all governments has made it evident, that there was hardly ever any thing altered in any settled estate, which was not followed by farther and farther alterations, and several inconveniences attending those alterations, unforeseen indeed at first, but such as in the event made too great impressions upon the publick to be accounted either *small* or *inconsiderable*.

These exceptions therefore being thus stript of their *plausibility* and force too, and returned upon the makers of them ; it follows, that notwithstanding all the late harangues concerning our differing in *lesser things* (as the phrase still goes) and *our contending about shadows*, and the like, made by some amongst us, who would fain be personally popular at the cost of the *publick*, and build themselves a reputation with the rabble upon the ruins of that church, which by all the obligations of *oaths* and *gratitude* they are bound to support, as (I am sure) that supports them ; it follows, I say, that for the governours of our church to be ready, after all this, to yield up the received *constitutions* of it, either to the *infirmity* or *importunity*, or the *plausible exceptions* (as their advocates are pleased to term them) of our clamorous dissenters, is so far from being a part either of the *piety*
or

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or *prudence* of those governours (as the same advocates insinuate) that it is the fear of many, both *pious* and *prudent* too, that in the end it is like to prove no other, than the letting a thief into the house only to avoid the noise and trouble of his rapping at the door.

And thus much for the first thing proposed, which was, to examine and consider the pretences alledged by dissenters for our quitting or yielding up any of the constitutions of our church. I now come to the

2. *General thing*, which is, to shew what are naturally like to be the *consequences* of such a *yieldance*.

In order to which I shall consider these two things.

1. What the *temper* and disposition of those men, who press for such compliances with them, used to be. And,

2. What the effect and consequence of such compliances has been heretofore. And,

1. For the *temper* of the men; this certainly should be considered; and if it ought to give any force to their demands, it ought to be extremely *peaceable* and *impartial*. But are there any qualities incident to the nature of man, which these persons are farther from? For do they treat the governours of the church with any other appellation but that of *Baal's priests*,

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formalists, dumb dogs, proud popish prelates, haters of God and good men, and the like? I say, is not this their usual dialect? And can we imagine that the spirit of Christianity can suggest such language and expressions? Is it possible, that where true religion governs in the heart, it should thus utter itself at the mouth? And to shew yet farther, that this temper can manifest itself by actions as well as words; did not those, who now plead conscience against law, in the year 41, persecute, plunder, kill and murder, those who pleaded and followed conscience according to law? And can any one assure the government that they will not, under the same circumstances, do the same things again?

And for their *impartiality*, did they ever grant allowance or *toleration* to any who were *dissenters* from them? The *Presbyterian* would grant none, and he has given the world so much under his own hand, in those many vehement books wrote by him on this subject; one of which, I well remember long since, was by a kind of sanctified quibble entituled, *Intolerable Toleration*; a pamphlet mean enough, and of little note in the world, but as it served to shew the temper of the *Presbyterian*, and how utterly averse he was to the indulging of any of a different persuasion from himself. And when his younger brother the *Independent*, the
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abler and more thriving sectarian of the two, had tripped up his heels *in the Lord* (a word then much in fashion) and so brought in his *independency*, with a kind of *toleration* along with it; yet still *prelacy*, no less than *papacy* itself, stood expressly excepted from any benefit, favour, or toleration, from the one party or the other; that is to say, both of them were ready to tolerate *Turks, Jews, Infidels* (and even all who will but acknowledge one God) rather than those of the communion of the church of *England*. This has been the way and temper of the persons whom we have to deal with. And now is it not pity but the whole government, civil and ecclesiastical, should bend and veil to such patterns of humility and self-denial, and forthwith abrogate and destroy all its laws, only because there is a *faction* disposed to break thro' and trample upon them? A *faction* which nothing can win, nothing oblige, and which will be sure to requite such a favour once done them, by turning it to the utmost reproach and ruin (if possible) of those who did it. And thus having given some short account of the *temper* and *disposition* of these men, I come now in the

Second place to consider, what the *effect* and *consequence* of such *compliances* and *relaxations* has been heretofore. And for this I appeal

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peal to the judgment, reading, and experience of all who have in any measure applied themselves to the observation of men and things, whether they ever yet found that any who pressed for *indulgences* and *forbearances*, did it with a real intent to acquiesce, and take up in those *forbearances* once granted them, without proceeding any farther? None, I am sure, ever yet did, but used them only as an art or instrument to get into power, and to make every concession a step to a farther demand; since every *grant* renders the person to whom it is made, so much the more considerable, and dangerous to be denied, when he shall take the boldness to ask more. To *grant*, is generally to *give ground*. And such persons ask some things only, in order to get others without asking; for no encroachers upon, or enemies to any publick constitution, *ask all at first*. Sedition itself is modest in the beginning; and no more than *toleration* may be petitioned for, when in the issue nothing less than *empire* and *dominion* is designed.

The nature of man acts the same way, whether in matters civil or ecclesiastical. And can we soon forget the methods by which that violent faction grew upon the throne between the years *forty* and *sixty*? Did not the facility and goodness of King *Charles I.* embolden their
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impudence, instead of satisfying their desires? Was not every condescension, every concession, every remission of his own right, so far from allaying the fury of their greedy appetites, that, like a breakfast, it rather called up the stomach, and fitted it the more for a dinner? Did not *craving* still grow upon *granting*, till nothing remained to be asked on one side, or given on the other, but the life of the giver?

Thus it was with the state; and I would fain hear any solid reason to prove that it will not fare alike with the church. For how has the papacy grown to that enormous height, and assumed such an extravagant power over sovereign princes, but by taking advantage from their own grants and favours to that rapacious and ungrateful see? which still took occasion from thence to raise itself gradually to farther and farther pretensions; till *courtesy* quickly passed into *claim*; and what was got by *petition*, was held by *prerogative*: so that at length insolence, grown big and bold with success, knew no bounds, but trampled upon the neck of emperors, controlled the *sceptre* with the *crozier*, and, in the face of the world, openly avowed a superiority and preheminance over crowned heads. Thus grew the papacy, and by the same ways will also grow other sects; for there is a papacy in every sect or faction;

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faction ; they all design the very same height or greatness, tho' the *Pope* alone hitherto has had the wit and fortune to compass it.

And thus having shewn what have been the effects of such *concessions* heretofore, as well as described the temper of the persons who now press for them ; I suppose it will not be very difficult for us to judge, what are like to be the future effects and consequences of the same amongst ourselves. Concerning which I shall lay down this assertion ; *That what effects and consequences any thing has had formerly and usually, and what in its own nature it tends to, and is apt to produce, it is infinitely sottish and irrational to imagine and suppose that it will not produce, and cause in the world for the future.* And I believe hardly any nation or government, but ours, would suffer the same cheat to be trump'd upon it twice immediately together. Every society in the world stands in the strength of certain laws, customs, and received usages, uniting the several parts of it into one body ; and accordingly the parting with any one of those laws or customs, is a real dissolution of the *continuity*, and consequently a *partial destruction* of the *whole*. It certainly shakes and weakens all the fabrick ; and weakness is but destruction begun, it tends to it, and naturally ends it.

But

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But to pass from argumentations founded upon the general nature of things, to the same made evident to sense by particular instances; let us here first of all suppose our *dissenters* to be dealt with upon terms of *comprehension* (as they call it) and took into the communion of the church, without submitting to the present conditions of its communion, or any necessary obligation to obey the established rules of it, then these things must follow; first, That men shall come into the national ministry of the church of *England* full of the *Scotch covenant*, and all those rebellious principles fresh and keen upon their spirits, which raised and carried on the late fatal war. Then will it also follow, that in the same diocese, and sometimes in the very same town, some shall use the *surplice*, and some shall not; and each shall have their parties prosecuting one another with the bitterest hatreds and animosities. Some in the same church, and at the same time, shall receive the *sacrament kneeling*, some *standing*, and others possibly *sitting*; some shall use the *cross in baptism*, and others shall not only not use it themselves, but shall also inveigh and preach against those who do. Some shall read this part of the *Common-prayer*, some that, and some perhaps none at all. And where (as in cathedrals) they cannot avoid the
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having it read by others, they shall come into the church when it is done, and stepping up into the pulpit (with great gravity no doubt) shall conceive a long, crude, extemporary prayer, in reproach of all the prayers which the church, with such admirable prudence and devotion, had been making before. Nay, in the same cathedral, you shall see one prebendary in a surplice, another in a long cloke, another in a short coat, or *jacket*; and in the performance of the publick service some *standing up* at the *Creed*, the *Gloria Patri*, and the *reading of the Gospel*; and others sitting, and perhaps laughing, and winking upon their fellow-schismatics, in scoff of those who practise these decent orders of the church. And from hence the mischief shall pass from *priest* to *people*, dividing them also into irreconcilable parties and factions; so that some shall come to church when such an one preaches, and absent themselves when another does. I will not hear this *formalist*, says one; and I will not hear that *schismatick* (with better reason) says another. But in the mean while the church, by these horrible disorders, is torn in pieces, and the common enemies of it, the papists, and some (who hate it as much) gratified. These (I say) are some of the certain, unavoidable effects of *comprehension*; nor indeed

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indeed could any other, or better, be expected by those, who knew that their surest way to ruin the church, would be to get into the preferments of it. So that I dare avouch, that to bring in *comprehension*, is nothing else but, in plain terms, to *establish a schism in the church by law*, and so bring a *plague* into the very bowels of it, which is more than sufficiently endangered already, by having one in its neighbourhood; a *plague* which shall eat out the very heart and soul, and consume the vitals and spirits of it, and this to such a degree, that in the compass of a few years, it shall scarce have any visible being or subsistence, or so much as the face of a national church to be known by.

But now from *comprehension* it may be natural and proper enough for us to pass to *toleration*. Concerning which latter, since it has had the fortune to get a law (or something like a law) made in its behalf, I think there cannot be matter of greater moment, or truer charity, than to inform mens consciences, how far this new law will warrant them in their *separation* from the church. For the vulgar and less knowing part of the nation, do verily reckon that this, as an act of *toleration*, has utterly cancelled all former obligations, which did, or might lie upon them, to join with the church in the publick worship of God. But this is a
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very great and dangerous mistake, and may, if persisted in, cost them no less than their souls; for certain it is, that there are laws extant amongst us, enjoining conformity to, and communion with the established church, as likewise obedience to the pastors thereof, legally set over it, and the respective members of the same: and consequently, that as long as the obligation of these laws continues, *conformity* to it must be a duty, and *nonconformity* a sin: and lastly, that the obligation of these laws does, and must continue, 'till the said laws are *actually repealed*; which as yet, I am sure, they are not, and I hope never will. Thus therefore stands our case. But what effect then, will some say, has this act for *toleration*? Why, truly, none at all, as to the nature and quality of the actions commanded or prohibited by the preceeding positive laws of the church: but as to the penalties annexed to those laws against the violaters of them, these indeed are taken off and rescinded by this *toleration* (or *indulgence* rather, for strictly it is no more.) So that it may, I confess, give *temporal impunity* to such as transgress upon this account; but for all that, it can never by so doing warrant the transgression itself: it may indeed indemnify the *person*, but cannot take away the *guilt*, which resulting from the
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very nature of the action is inseparable from it. Nor is it able to take off all sorts of penalties neither; for as much as those enacted by the divine law can never be remitted or *abrogated* by any human law, or temporal authority whatsoever. And therefore our separatists will do well to consider, that the laws of our church (admitting them to be but human laws) yet so long as they neither require any thing *false in belief*, nor *immoral in practice*, stand ratified by that general law of God, commanding obedience to all *lawful*, tho' but civil and temporal authorities; and consequently oblige the conscience, in the strength of that general divine law, to an obedience to all that shall be enacted and enjoined by the said authorities. So that when God shall come to pass sentence upon men for their disobedience to the same, whether in this world or the next, I fear that no plea of *toleration* will be able to ward off the *execution*.

Most true it is, both from principles of philosophy and divinity, that the abrogation of the positive declared penalties of a law is no *abrogation* or repeal of the law itself. And accordingly upon this occasion I must declare, that penalties and rewards are not of the *essence* of a law, but *extrinsick* to it; nor does any law owe its obliging power to them, but solely

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to the sovereign will of the legislators ; so that the taking away the penalties of any law does but leave the obliging power of the law, as it was before ; *law* being properly nothing else, *but the will of the supreme power to the persons subject to it, concerning something to be done or not done, possessed or not possessed by, or any ways belonging to, the said persons.* This, I affirm, comprehends the whole nature of a law precisely considered : and as for the annexion of *punishments* to the violation, or of *rewards* to the performance of it ; they are not of the precise intrinsick *nature* and obligation of a *law*, but are added only as appendages to strengthen it, and procure a more certain awe to it, and performance of it : for as much as man will be more likely not to transgress a law, being under the fear of a declared *punishment* for so doing, and to perform it upon a persuasion of a sure promised *reward* for such a performance, than if neither of these were added to it. Nevertheless, had God said to mankind, *I command you to do this, and my will is that you forbear that*, without expressing any reward for doing the former, or penalty for not doing the latter ; it had been as duly and essentially a *law*, and the obligation thereof as real, as if the *reward* and *penalty* had been by an express sanction declared to either.

And

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And if any one should here object; how then could God punish for any neglect of his law, or reward for the doing of it, had there been no sanction of a *punishment* for the former, nor of *reward* for the latter? I answer, that the sovereignty and justice of God, together with the *nature* and *merit* of every action of the creature, will sufficiently account for this; without recurring to any positive sanction of *penalties* or *rewards*; it being unquestionably just with God (and natural conscience with the τὸ γινώσκον τοῦ Θεοῦ, is sufficient to teach every man, that it is so) to punish an action, in the *nature of it worthy of punishments*, though he should not declare by any positive sanction beforehand, that he *would punish it*; and in like manner he may freely reward any good action, though he should never oblige himself by any precedent promise so to do. And upon this account it seems to me very remarkable, that in the ten commandments (which are so many particular laws of God) there are seven of the ten without either *reward* or *penalty* in the decalogue annexed to them; and no doubt, tho' God had never expressed either of them elsewhere in the writings of *Moses*, they had, notwithstanding, been as essentially laws, and as really obliging, as they were afterwards upon the clearest and most express declaration of the

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said *rewards* and *penalties*. And here, I confess, I look upon God's declaring the addition of penalties and rewards to his laws, rather as an effect of his *goodness*, than of his strict *justice*; nothing, that I know of, obliging him thereunto upon that account. Not but that I acknowledge also, that such a *declaration* adds great strength to his laws; as to their prevalence upon men to observe them. But for all that, to *prevail* with men actually to *do their duty*, and to *oblige them to it*, are very *different things*, and proceed upon very *different grounds*. The laws of men, I own, are extremely lame and defective, without these two great props to support them, and very hardly able (especially since the corruption of man's nature by sin) to compass the proper *ends of laws* upon men, barely by the sense of *precise duty*. So that if there were no *rewards* or *punishments* proposed, there would hardly be any actual obedience. However a law will still be truly and properly a law, so long as it *obliges men*, tho' it may be unable to *bring them actually to obey it*. As a cripple, tho' never so lame and weak, and even with his legs cut off too, is a man still, and as *essentially*, tho' not as *integrally* so, as he was before.

This I thought fit to discourse about the nature and obligation of *laws*, *penalties*, and
rewards,

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rewards, upon this occasion. But to return to the high and mighty piece of *policy sublimata* (as I may call it) *toleration*: I am far from grudging our dissenters the benefit of the law they have obtained (if it be such) and farther from soliciting a repeal of it; but being providentially engaged in the subject I am now upon, I cannot but, as a Divine, discharge my conscience both to God and the world, by declaring what I judge according to the best of my reason, will, and unavoidably must, be the consequences of a thing, which this *church* and *kingdom*, ever since they were a church and kingdom, have been wholly strangers to. And because such consequences, if drawn out to the utmost, would be innumerable; I shall only mention one instead of all the rest, as being certain, obvious, and undeniable; and that is, the vast encrease of *sects* and *heresies* amongst us, which, where all restraint is taken off, must of necessity grow to the highest pitch, that the devil himself can raise such a *Babel* to: so that there shall not be one bold ring-leading knave or fool, who shall have the confidence to set up a new sect, but shall find proselytes enough to wear his name, and list themselves under his banner; of which the *Quakers** are a demonstration past all dispute. And then

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* *George Fox*, an illiterate cobbler, first beginner and head of them.

what a vast part of this poor deluded people must of necessity be drawn after these impostures! So that as *number* and *novelty* generally run down *truth* and *paucity* for a while; the church, and orthodox part of the nation in communion with it, will probably in a short space be overborn and swallowed up by the spreading mischief. And moreover, since it is impossible for government or society to subsist long, where there is no national bond or cement of religion to hold it together, it must quickly dissolve into confusion: and since confusion cannot last always, but that it must in the issue settle into *something* or other; that [*something*] here no doubt will and must be *popery*, *popery* infallibly and irresistibly: for the church of *England* being once suppressed, no other church or *sect* amongst us (for all besides it are no better) has any bottom or foundation, or indeed any tolerable pretence to set up and settle itself upon.

And that this fatal consequence thus drawn is neither false nor precarious, we may be assured from the papists themselves. For did not their late * Agent, who lost his life in their service, and whose letters are so well known, tell us in one of them, *that the way, by which he intended to have popery brought in, was by tolera-*

* *Coleman.*

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toleration ; and that if an act for general liberty of conscience could be obtained, it would give the greatest blow to the protestant religion here, that ever it received from its birth? And did he not also complain, that all their disappointments, miseries, and hazards, were owing to that fatal revocation (as he calls it) of the king's declaration for liberty of conscience? And lastly, does he not affirm, that all the advantages they expected to make, was by the help of the nonconformists, as presbyterians, independents, and other sects ; I transcribe his own words. And shall we not here believe, that the papists themselves best knew, what were the properest and most efficacious ways, for the prosecuting their own interest? Nay, and did not King James II. with great ostentation as well as earnestness, often declare, that he would have a kind of Magna Charta (forsooth) or standing law for liberty of conscience in this nation for ever? And can we believe, that his design was to keep out popery by this project? No, surely ; for such as believe even transubstantiation itself, cannot believe this. So that let all our separatists and dissenters know, that they are the pope's journeymen to carry on his work ; and for aught I know, (were but King James amongst us) might be treated, together with his nuncio, at Guildhall. They are, I

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say, his tools, to do that for him, which he cannot do for himself (as a carpenter cannot be an hatchet, how effectually soever he may use it.) In a word, they are his harbingers and forerunners to prepare and make plain a way for him to come amongst us ; and consequently they, even they, who are the loudest criers out against popery, are the surest and most industrious factors for it. For it is evident to the whole world, that it is their weakening of the church of *England* by their separation from it, and their insufferable virulent invectives against it, which makes *old Reynard* the pope, with his wolves about him, presume, that he may attack it now (being thus weakened by our encouraged dissenters to his hauds) with victory and success. The thief first breaks the hedge and mounds of the vineyard, to fetch away a few clusters ; but the wild boar enters by the same breach, and makes havock of all. But let us in the mean time, with all christian submission, wait the good-pleasure of almighty God, and our governors, for one seven years, and by that time I question not but we shall see, what this new project tends to, and is like to end in ; while, at present, we have but too great reason to believe, that the chief design of some of the busiest contrivers, and most indefatigable promoters of it, was, and is, by such a promiscuous toleration of so many sects and

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and heresies amongst us, to bring the church of *England* at length to need a *toleration* itself, and not to have it, when it needs it.

As to which truly primitive church (whatsoever fate may attend it) this may and must be said of it, that it is a church which claims nothing of secular power to itself, but like a poor orphan exposed naked and friendless to the world, pretends to no other helps but the goodness of God, the piety of its principles, and the justness of its own cause, to maintain it; a church not born into the world with *teeth* and *talons*, like *popery* and *presbytery*, but like a *lamb*, innocent, and defenceless, and silent, not only under the shearer, but under the butcher too; a church, which as it is obedient to the civil power, without any treacherous distinctions or reserves, so would be glad to have the countenance and protection of that power in return for her hearty obedience to it; tho' after all, if it cannot be protected by it, it is yet resolved to be peaceable and quiet under it, and while it parts with every thing else, *to hold fast its integrity*.

And now if almighty God should, for the nation's unworthy and ungrateful usage of so excellent a church, so pure and peaceable a religion, bereave us of it, by letting in upon us the tyranny and superstition of another,
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it is pity but it should come in its full force and power; and then, I hope, that such as have betrayed and enslaved their country, will consider, that there is a temporal, as well as an ecclesiastical interest concerned in the case, and that *there are lands to be converted* as well as *Hereticks*; and that those who pretend, that they can with a word speaking change the *substance* of some things, can with as much ease alter the *property* of others. God's will be done in all things; but if Popery ever comes in by *English* hands, (as I see not how it can come in by any other) I doubt not but it will fully pay the scores of those, who brought it in. But,

3. I come now to the third and last general thing at first proposed, which was to shew, *What influence and efficacy a strict adherence to the constitutions of the church and an absolute refusal to part with any of them, is like to have upon the settlement of the church, and the purity of the Gospel amongst us.*

As for this, I shall shew three ways, by which it tends effectually to procure such a settlement. As,

1. By being the grand and most sovereign means to cause and preserve *unity* in the church. The Psalmist mentions this as one of the noblest and greatest excellencies of the *Jewish* church, *Psal. cxxii. 8. That it was built*

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built as a city, which is at unity in itself. Unity gives strength, and strength duration. The Papists abroad frequently tell the *English*, that if we could but *once be united amongst ourselves*, we should be *a formidable church indeed*. And for this reason, there was none, whom they so mortally hated (I speak upon certain information) as that late renowned Archbishop and Martyr, whose whole endeavour was to establish a settled uniformity in all the *British* churches; for his zeal and activity in which glorious attempt, the *Presbyterians* cut him off, according to the *Papists* hearts desire.

Now a resolution to keep all the constitutions of the church, the parts of its service, and the conditions of its communion entire, without lopping off any one of them, must needs unite all the *ministers* and members of it; while it engages them, as the Apostle so passionately exhorts the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. i. 10. *to speak all the same thing*. Not that I think, that the Apostles meaning is, that all should speak the *same* thing in the very same words (though I cannot disprove this neither, as to a considerable part of divine service.) But this I affirm, that the using *the same words* (still allowing for the diversity of languages) is the readiest, the surest, and most effectual way to speak the *same things*, of any other way whatsoever :

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foever: and it is sufficiently known, that the laws of this national church, by the liturgy it has provided and prescribed, enjoins the whole nation so to do. But on the contrary, if any one be *indulged* in the omission of the least thing there *enjoin'd*, they cannot be said to *speak all the same thing*. In which case, besides the deformity of the thing itself, so much exploded by St. *Paul* in the whole fourteenth chapter of his first epistle to the *Corinthians*, viz. that, where the worship of God was the same, the manner of performing it should be with so much diversity, as the Apostle there tells us it was; I say, besides the indecency of it, such a difference of practice, even in any christian congregation, must and will certainly produce an irreconcilable division of minds, since the said diversity cannot be imagined to proceed from any thing else, but an opinion that one man understands and does his duty after a better and more spiritual manner than another; and consequently has got the start of his neighbour or fellow-minister, either in point of judgement or devotion; in neither of which is any man apt to give precedency to another, especially when it comes once to be contested. *Unity* without *uniformity*, being much like *essence* without *existence*; a mere word and a notion, and no where to be found in *nature*.

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2. A strict *adherence to the constitutions and orders of the church*, is another way to settle it, by begetting in the churches enemies themselves an opinion of the requisiteness and fitness of those usages, for which they see the governors and ministers of the church (men of unexceptionable learning and integrity) so concerned, that they can by no means be brought to recede from them. Let factious byassed people pretend what they will *outwardly*, yet they cannot but reason the matter with themselves *inwardly*; that certainly there must be something more than ordinary in those things, which men of parts, judgment, and good lives so heartily contend for, and so tenaciously adhere to. For it is not natural to suppose, that serious men can or will be resolute for trifles, fight for straws, and encounter the fiercest oppositions for such small things, as all the interests of piety, order, and religion, may be equally provided for, whether the church retains or parts with them. This certainly is unnatural, and morally impossible. And on the other side, let none think, that the people will have any *reverence* for that, for which the pastors of the church themselves shew an *indifference*.

And here let me utter a great, but sad truth; a truth not so fit to be *spoke*, as to be *sighed*
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out by every true son and lover of the church, viz. that the *wounds*, which the church of *England* now bleeds by, she received *in the house of her friends* (if they may be called so,) viz. her treacherous undermining friends, and that most of the nonconformity to her, and separation from her, together with a contempt of her excellent constitutions, have proceeded from nothing more, than from the false, partial, *half-conformity* of too many of *her ministers*. The *surplice* sometimes worn, and oftener laid aside; the *liturgy* so read, and mangled in the reading, as if they were ashamed of it; the divine service so curtailed, as if the people were to have but the *tenths of it* from the priest, for *the tenths* he had received from them. The clerical habit neglected by such in orders as frequently travel the road clothed like farmers or graziers, to the unspeakable shame and scandal of their profession; the holy sacrament indecently and slovenly administered: the furniture of the altar abused and embezzelled; and the *table of the Lord* profaned. These, and the like vile passages, have made some schismatics, and confirmed others; and in a word have made so many *Nonconformists* to the church, by their *conforming* to their *minister*.

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It was an observation and saying of a judicious prelate, that of all the sorts of enemies which our church had, there was none so deadly, so pernicious, and likely to prove so fatal to it, as the *conforming puritan*. It was a great truth, and not very many years after ratified by direful experience. For if you would have the *conforming puritan* described to you, as to what he is ;

He is one who lives by the *altar*, and turns *his back* upon it ; one, who catches at the *preferments* of the church, but hates the *discipline* and *orders* of it ; one, who practises conformity, as papists take *oaths* and *tests*, that is, with an inward abhorrence of what he does for the present, and a resolution to act quite contrary, when occasion serves ; one, who, during his conformity, will be sure to be known by such a distinguishing badge, as shall point him out to, and secure his credit with, the dissenting brotherhood ; one, who still declines reading the church-service himself, leaving that work to curates or readers, thereby to keep up a profitable interest with thriving seditious tradesmen, and groaning, ignorant, but rich widows ; one, who in the midst of his conformity thinks of a turn of state, which may draw on one in the church too ; and accordingly is very careful to be-
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have himself so, as not to *over-shoot his game*, but to stand right and fair in case a *wish'd-for change* should bring fanaticism again into *fashion*; which it is more than possible that he secretly desires, and does the utmost he can to promote and bring about.

These, and the like, are the principles which act and govern the *conforming puritan*; who, in a word, is nothing else but ambition, avarice, and hypocrisy, *-serving* all the real interests of schism and faction *in the church's livery*. And therefore if there be any one who has the front to own himself a minister of our church, to whom the foregoing character may be justly applied (as I fear there are but too many) howsoever such an one may for some time sooth up and flatter himself in his detestable dissimulation; yet when he shall hear of such and such of his neighbours, his parishioners, or acquaintance, gone over from the church to *conventicles*, of several turned *quakers*, and of others fallen off to *popery*; and lastly, when the noise of those national dangers and disturbances, which are every day threatening us, shall ring about his ears, let him then lay his hand upon his false heart, and with all seriousness of remorse accusing himself to God and his own conscience, say, I am the person, who by my
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Conforming by halves, and by my treacherous prevaricating with the duty of my profession, so sacredly promised, and so solemnly sworn to, have brought a reproach upon the purest and best constituted church in the christian world; it is I, who by slighting and slubbering over her holy service and sacraments, have scandalized and cast a stumbling-block before all the neighbourhood, to the great danger of their souls; I who have been the occasion of this man's *faction*, that man's *quakerism*, and another's *popery*; and thereby, to the utmost of my power, contributed to those dismal convulsions, which have so terribly shook and weakned both church and state. Let such a mocker of God and man, I say, take his share of all this horrid guilt; for both heaven and earth will lay it at his door, as the general result of his actions; it is all absolutely his own, and will stick faster and closer to him, than to be *thrown off*, and *laid aside* by him, as easily as his *Surplice*.

3. And lastly, a strict adherence to the rules of the church, without yielding to any abatements in favour of our separatists, is the way to settle and establish it, by *possessing its enemies with an awful esteem of the conscience and constancy of the governours and ministers of it*. For if the things under debate be given up to

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the adversary, it must be upon one of these two accounts; either, 1. That the persons who thus yield them up, judge them unfit to be retained. Or, 2. That they find themselves unable to retain them; one or both of these must of necessity be implied in such a yieldance. If the first, then will our Dissenters cry out, where has been the conscience of our church-governours for so many years, in imposing and insisting upon those things which *they themselves do acknowledge and confess not fit to be insisted upon?* And is not this at once to own all the libellous charges and invectives, which our nonconformists have been so long pursuing our church with? Is not this to fling dirt upon the government of it ever since the reformation? Nay, and does not the same dirt light upon the reformers themselves, who first put the church into the order it is in at present, and died for it when they had done? Such therefore as are disposed to humour these dissenters, by giving up any of the constitutions of our church, should do well to consider, what and how much is imported by such an act; and this they shall find to be no less than a tacit acknowledgment of the truth and justice of all those pleas, by which our adversaries have been contending for such a yieldance to them all along. The truth is, it will do

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do a great deal towards the removal of the charge of *Schism* from their own door to ours, by representing the grounds of their separation from us hitherto lawful at the least. For the whole state of the matter between us lies in a very narrow compass, viz. that either the church of *England* enjoins something *unlawful*, as the condition of her communion, and then she is *schismatical*; or there is no unlawful thing thus enjoined by her, and then those who *separate* from her, are, and must be the *Schismatics*; and till they prove that the church of *England* requires of such as do, or would communicate with her, either the belief or profession of something false, or the practice of something impious or immoral, it will be impossible to prove the unlawfulness of those things, which she has made the conditions of her communion; and consequently to free those who separate from her from the charge of schism. Now so long as this is the persuasion of the governours of our church concerning these things, the world cannot but look upon them in their immoveable adherence to them, as acting like men of conscience, and, which is next to it, like men of courage. The reputation of which two great qualities in our Bishops will do more to the daunting of the church's enemies, than all their concessions can

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do to the gaining them, for that is impossible.
In the mean time, *courage awes an enemy, and*
back'd with conscience, confounds him. He
who having the *law* on his side, and *justice*
too (for they are not always the same) resolves
not to *yield*, takes the directest way to be
yielded to; for where an enemy sees resolution,
he supposes strength, and upon trial generally
finds it; but to yield is to confess *weakness*,
and consequently to embolden *opposition*. And
I believe it will be one day found, that no-
thing has contributed more to make the dis-
senting nonconforming party *considerable*, than
their being *thought so*. It has been our court-
ing them, and treating with them, which has
made them stand upon their *own terms*, in-
stead of coming over *to ours*.

And here I shall shut up this consideration
with one remark; and it is about the *Council*
of Trent; the design of calling which council,
in all the *princes* who were at all for the call-
ing one, was to humble and reduce the power
of the *Papacy*; and great and fierce opposition
was made against that power all along by the
prelates and ambassadors of those princes: but
so far were they from prevailing, that the
Papacy weathered out the storm, and fixed
it self deeper and stronger than ever it was be-
fore. But what method did it take thus to
settle

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settle it self? Why, in a word, no other but a positive resolution not to yield or part with any thing, nor to give way either to the *importunity* or *plausible exceptions*, nor, which is yet more, to the *power* of those *princes*. So that, as the renowned writer of the history of that council observes, notwithstanding all those violent blusters and assaults made on every side against the papal power, *yet in the end* (I give you the very words of the historian) *the patience and resolution of the legates overcame all.*

Now what may we gather from hence? Why surely this very naturally; that if courage and resolution could be of such force as to support a bad cause, it cannot be of less to maintain and carry on a good one; and if it could thus long prop up a rotten building, which has no foundation, why may it not only strengthen, but even perpetuate that which has so firm an one as the church of *England* now stands upon?

And here to sum up all: Could *St. Paul* find it necessary to take such a course with those erroneous Judaizing dissenters in the church of *Galatia*, *as not to give place to them, no not for an hour?* and is it not more necessary for us, where the pretences for the schism are less *plausible*, and the persons likely to be
perverted

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perverted by it much more numerous? Let us therefore, by way of close, briefly recapitulate, and lay together the fore-alledged reasons and arguments, why we should by all means deal with our separtists and dissenters as *St. Paul* (a most authentick example) did with those Judaizing hybrid christians, *viz. not give place to them at all.* And that because,

1. By our yielding or giving place to them, we have no rational ground to conclude that we shall *gain* them, but rather encourage them to encroach upon us by farther demands; for as much as the experience of all Governments has found *concessions* so far from quieting dissenters, that they have only animated them to greater and fiercer *contentions.*

2. By our yielding or *giving place to them,* we make the establish'd laws, in which these men can neither prove *injustice* nor *inexperience,* submit to them, who in duty, reason, and conscience, ought to obey and submit to those laws.

3. By our yielding or *giving place to them,* we grant that to those, who being themselves in power, never thought it reasonable to grant the same to others in the like case.

4. By our yielding or *giving place to them,* we bring a pernicious incurable *Schism* into the church, if it be by a *comprehension*; tho' tis hoped that the wisdom of the government will

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prevent the equal danger, which some fear from an *unlimited toleration*.

5. By our yielding to these men in a way of *comprehension*, we bring such men into the church, as once destroy'd and pull'd it down, as unlawful and antichristian, and never yet renounced those principles upon which they did so, nor (as it is rationally to be thought) will.

6. By such a *comprehension* we endeavour to satisfy those persons, who could never yet agree amongst themselves about any one thing or constitution, in which they would all rest satisfied.

7. By indulging them this way, we act *partially*, in gratifying one Sect, who can pretend to no more favour than what others may as justly claim who are *not comprehended*; and withal, *imprudently*, by indulging one party, who will *do us no good*, to the exasperation of many more, who have a greater power *to do us hurt*.

8. By such a concession we sacrifice the constitutions of our church to the will and humour of those, *whom the church has no need of*; neither their abilities, parts, piety, interest, nor any thing else belonging to them, considered.

9. And lastly, by such a course we open the mouths of the *Romish* party against us; who will be still reproaching us for going off from their *church* to a *constitution*, which we ourselves now think fit to relinquish and *surrender up*, by alter-

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ing her discipline, and the terms of her communion ; and may justly ask of us, where, and in what kind of church-constitution we intend finally to fix?

These, I say, amongst many more that might be named, are the reasons why we contend, *that our dissenters are by no means to be given place to in the least.* And after all, may not this concluding question be likewise asked, viz. Whether, *supposing that this yielding or giving up the things so long and earnestly disputed both for and against amongst us had been done in a parliamentary way, and seconded by the clergy's own solemn act and deed in convocation, it would be now imagined by any one of solid sense, reason and experience, that the church of England should ever have seen the same rites, rules, and constitutions, restored to it again ; nay, even at that grand and glorious restoration of King Charles II. and of the whole nation with him, in the year sixteen hundred and sixty ?* No certainly, no ; and I, for my own part, neither do nor can believe it ; and let any one else (*of a faith less than able to remove mountains*) believe it if he can.

And therefore what remains now, but that we implore the continued protection of the Almighty upon a church by such a miracle restored to us, and (all things considered) by no less a miracle hitherto preserved amongst us ; power-
fully

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fully to defeat her enemies, and increase her friends, and so settle her upon the best and surest foundations of purity, peace, and order, that neither *the gates of hell*, nor all the arts of those *within them*, may ever prevail against her.

Which he, the most sovereign Lord and patron of our church, and defender of our faith, of his infinite goodness effect. To whom be rendered and ascribed (as is most due) all praise, might, majesty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.

The End of the Fifth Volume.

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